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ABSTRACT

This paper suggests that a discussion of linguistic pluralism in France begins by chronicling the emergence of French as the primary language in early French history and the role of linguistic minorities at various periods in French history. It then focuses on growing linguistic activism in the second half of the twentieth century, when the emphasis on regionalism became a trend toward pluralism. National legislation and regulation concerning the use and teaching of local languages are noted, and the diverse linguistic minorities within France are then surveyed, examining their histories, distribution, and treatment in education. Languages discussed include Alsatian, Breton, Corsican, Basque, Flemish, Occitan, and Savoyard. Literature on the minority languages of France is briefly reviewed. (Contains 43 references.) (MSE)

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LINGUISTIC PLURALISM IN FRANCE

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If the form of speech that spontaneously comes to a national (as opposed to an immigrant) is considered a Native Language, then France can boast more of these than most Western European countries.[1] Of course, such tongues do not claim the prestigious status of National Languages, or no longer do. France, surprisingly, never shone for tolerance regarding these. It has become a well-publicized view that the French elites, through the ages, always ran into the ground any attempt at using any idiom but the sacrosanct National Language, a modern avatar of *Langue d'oïl*. Such was supposed to be the effect of their centralizing zeal! Like many other stereotypes, this cliché is partly false: monarchic France was not the linguistically voracious ogre assumed by this truism. Essentially pragmatic, its greed was for tribute and real estate, and if the locals wished to live in a state of superb isolation, they were welcome to do so. The king had no trouble finding bilingual elites to run provincial administration.

It is also largely true. When the Revolution decreed that citizens were to participate in the government of their country, it became mandatory that all nationals be able to understand legal documents. Fascination with a common language made its appearance, and with the ruthlessness that naturally comes to people who pride themselves on serving the Common Good. A French sociologist remarks that the Revolutionaries considered language as a *method*: "To reform language, to purge it of the usages linked to the old society and impose it in its purified form, was to impose a thought that would in itself be purged and purified." (Bourdieu, 47)[2]

During its long expansion, France annexed many territories where other languages were spoken, not all of which became instantly extinct. Some of the languages fortunately survived.

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[1] With gratefulness to NMSU for supporting the composition of this work as a Sabbatical Research paper and to friends Odette Margot, a scholar in Cahors, for compiling French sources, and Alexander Moore, NMSU *Emeritus*, for the editing of the text.

[2] An uncredited translation implies that either the discussed English-language commentator or the author claims responsibility for it.

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There is, indeed, an incredible number and variety of native languages in France. *Basque* and *Catalan* are also used in Northern Spain; the latter is a Romance language distinct from Spanish and from French. The former is an enigma for linguists: not a Indo-European language, it does not even belong to any known linguistic family. Related to better-known languages, *Alsatian*, *Flemish* and *Corsican* are respectively dialects of German, Dutch and Italian. *Breton*, a bough of the Celtic branch, is exclusive to France. The heir of *Langue d'oc*[3] is also specific to France: *Occitan*, an eastern dialect of which being *Provençal*. *Franco-Provençal* is a derivative both from *Langues d'oc* and *oïl*. For this reason, it may be considered as a *patois* of French or a romance language of its own. Which we have done, thus paying hommage to its extensions, the Swiss French dialects and the speech of the 'Aosta' valley in Italy."[it] corresponded with the zone of influence of the great commercial and cultural center of Lyons." (Bernaud, 53)

THE EXPANSION OF FRENCH

In the study of the linguistic imperialism of *Langue d'oïl*, it would be pointless to go back to times when it was not widely documented yet. Thus, expansion under the Merovingian or Carolingian dynasties is irrelevant to our topic. *Langue d'oïl* is first exemplified in the Strasbourg Oath (843), but its common use can be traced in deeds, religious and epic romances to the beginning of the XIIth century. In the same spirit, our survey only covers the period when expansion encroached upon lands speaking other languages. The linguistic growth of French is not coterminous with France's development, either. In fact several monarchs could seize 'alien' lands where *Langue d'oïl* was used. This idiom was indeed more extensive than diminutive Isle-de-France, the patrimony of the Capetians! Philip II Augustus could, for instance, conquer Normandy (1204) and considerably enlarge his kingdom without entering our range of study. This survey of linguistico-geographical expansion will, however, start with his reign (1180-1223).

The Impressive Growth of the XIIIth Century

Perhaps encouraged by the Normandy success, the king starts meddling in the politics of Flanders, first by increasing his influence North of Isle-de-France, then in a more aggressive way. He crushes the

[3] *oïl* and *oc* were simply the ways to say *yes* in two kinds of Medieval French.

armies of Ferrand, Count of Flanders, and of Emperor Otto, Ferrand's overlord, at Bouvines (1214). This is remembered as the first success of a French king celebrated by the population of his kingdom. And the first victory of *Langue d'oïl* over a local language: the Flemish of *Westhoek*.

At the same period the heresy of the Cathars[4], a gnostic religion, spreads over the County of Toulouse with the tacit complicity of the feudal authorities. This region is under English control but, since the Plantagenets are theoretically vassals of Philip II... When Pope Innocent III calls for a 'Crusade against the Albigenses', he expects the king of France to lead the repression. But Philip Augustus prefers to entrust the leadership to an obscure knight, Simon de Montfort, so that he can concentrate upon the campaign in Flanders. After a war of desolation, fires, crop destruction, massacres, victory is achieved in 1213. Following reprisals against the allies of the Count of Toulouse, all that is now the Southwestern part of France (and naturally *Occitan, Catalan, Basque*) falls under control of the king, and must submit to Frenc[1].

Louis VIII, son of Philip, resumes the crusade in 1226 and, after the siege of Montségur, burns the 200 remaining priests of the heresy at the stake. This was the fitting conclusion of one of the most active and gruesome periods of growth for France and the French language. "Ainsi, en moins de trente années, la monarchie avait atteint les rives de la Manche, de l'Atlantique et de la Méditerranée."(Rossiaud, 343) [5] Starting from the tiny superficy of Isle-de-France, this is an outstanding success. Naturally, in this feudal world, many of these conquests are presented to one king's relative or another and do not directly enhance the national domain. But, as far as their linguistic identity is concerned, it matters little whether they experience the fate of a province or of an appanage!

The Moratorium of Growth

After such impressive beginnings, relatively little marks the two following centuries. Out of the frightening 'French' domain of the Plantagenets, only Guienne remains a problem, a recurrent sore that constantly demands routine repressive operations and finally serves as the English pretext for the Hundred Years War. And the Duchy of Brittany, though not legally a tributary of London, welcomes English advisors who are hostile to French policies. The dominating crises of the XIVth century are the Hundred Years War and the

[4] Better known under the toponym *Albigenses*.

[5] *In less than 30 years, the kingdom had reached the coasts of the Channel, the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.*

Black Death. They cause a 50% drop in the population of Europe and provoke two centuries of depression after the exhilarating XIIth and XIIIth centuries.

Resuming the Conquering Spirit

Louis XI has to face two main difficulties: the Duchies of Burgundy and Brittany. After sowing discord among his allies, Louis XI attacks Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, when he tries to subvert Lorraine and kills him at the battle of Nancy (1477). Louis gets the right to oversee the succession of Burgundy, and the danger for the French crown is thus dismissed. *Franco-Provençal*, spoken in Burgundy, is at that point under the dominance of *Langue d'oïl*.

Louis XI does not solve the Breton problem, but he makes sure that the pro-English advisers are expelled and that France will be consulted when the Duke's heiresses marry. No threat yet concerning the *Breton* language, but a reversal is looming in the future...

François I annexes Brittany in 1532, following Duchess Anne's wedding with Charles VIII, then with Louis XII. "Le contrat de mariage prévoyait la reconnaissance des libertés et institutions bretonnes. Mais la clause ne sera jamais respectée par les rois de France." (Goyhenetche, cited by Gaquin, 10)[6]

Taking advantage of the enrichment of French with classical derivatives by the Pléiades poets, royal power wishes to replace Latin with French to draw official documents. The ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts (1539) forbids the use of Latin and, instead, promotes writing in French. "À l'heure où le toscan devient la langue de Rome et où Luther traduit la Bible en un allemand accessible à tous, un phénomène du même ordre et d'égale conséquence se produit donc en France : le français de Paris et de la Loire, substitué au latin dans les tribunaux, devient la langue nationale." (Delumeau, 90)[7] In fact, Latin is not the real objective of this piece of legislation which will be used mostly against the local languages, according to their advocates. Among other cases, *Breton* and *Franco-Provençal* lose their privilege within their own Duchies!

When we come to the reign of Louis XIV, the situation is still less clear. Not only is he a notorious

[6] *Recognizing Breton liberties and institutions was requested in the wedding contract. But the French kings never honored this.*

[7] *At the same time Tuscan becomes the tongue of Rome and Luther translates the Bible into a kind of German accessible to all, a similar and equally important phenomenon takes place in France: Parisian and Loire French, replacing Latin in court, becomes the national language.*

bellicose monarch, but he also gathers provinces alloted to him by the Treaty of Westphalia (1648, signed when he was 10!), one of the few treaties which shaped up Europe as we know it[8].

On the positive side, historians are reporting the contentment of the general population about the new royal administration. It seems that until the 1660s, governments have cared little about what the local authorities are doing. With Louis XIV, this changes radically. All regional assemblies and parliaments are practically replaced with the royal administrators. Paradoxically enough, this pleases the people: they prefer to wait through the slow running of the royal judiciary than being submitted to the whims of their local betters. "On peut mettre à l'actif de l'administration française d'alors une incontestable réussite : l'intégration morale des provinces récemment conquises (Alsace, Artois, Roussillon, Flandre wallonne, Franche-Comté." (Pillorget, 1850)[9] The king must demand formal enforcement of the Villers-Cotterêts ordinance, but the local governors are pragmatically tolerant. The Alsatian Council is using routinely French, Latin and German in its work. These popular administrators are often locals. So that a feeling of belonging to the same kingdom slowly turns into an affect of national identity.

Is it only the opinion of the French-speaking invaders? Supporters of other languages claim it is so, but they cannot quote many texts to make their point. We are eventually left with the time-honored alternative of believing the sources quoted by historians or the argumentative rhetoric of ethnic critics.

But, late in the long reign, a powerful Catholic trend seizes the Court until the Nantes Edict (granting the Protestants a kind of second-class recognition) is repelled (1685). The practical consequence is that Louis sends troops to mop up the Reformed Religion in the newly acquired provinces of the South and Southeast. The elites of these *Occitan*-speaking regions are massacred during the terrible *dragonnades* or sent to the galleys.

Corsica, as an island, has been continuously drawn between maritime powers. During the Middle-Ages, it was disputed mostly by Genoa and Aragon. While distant lands are fighting for theoretical allegiance, local warring nobles are extorting tribute. France intervenes for the first time into Corsican affairs in the

[8] Verdun, Versailles and Yalta are three others

[9] *An incontrovertible success may be credited to the French bureaucracy of the time: the moral assimilation of the provinces recently conquered: Alsace, Northern France, Northern Catalonia, French-speaking Flanders, the Jura area.*

Renaissance, when Henri II conquers the island...and turns it back to Genoa as per the treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis. the Corsican patriots fight the Genoese government, and all expeditionary forces of different allies of Genoa. In 1738 the French attempt to quell the rebellion with the usual means, redolent of the Louis XIV *dragonnades*. In 1768, France annexes Corsica. Probably under revolutionnary enthusiasm, the Corsican deputies *demand* integration into the French nation. Who obliged! Consequently, the *Corsican* language is outlawed and more drastically than it was under the competing monarchies. (see Carrington, 320)

The Revolution

The period of Terror in 1793-1794 has its effect upon the linguistic landscape. After the execution of Louis XVI, the obligation for priests to swear allegiance to the Republic, the fall of the 'Gironde' party (the bourgeois moderates in Parliament), peasants on the border Brittany / Vendée and of the *Breton*-speaking part of Western Brittany spontaneously rebell; some of their traditional lords cap the organization, dubbed *Chouannerie*, after the word for 'owl' in the Vendean dialect. Originally not at all a linguistic movement, it represents a mixture of conservative, loyalist and religious resentments. The reaction of the Committee of Public Safety is very harsh: it seems that 400 000 civilians have lost their life in that civil war. The *Breton* language is first casualty in this operation, not only out of diminished number of speakers but also by being given a counter-revolutionary image, as stated in the Barère and Grégoire reports.

The P. B. Barère report on 'Foreign idioms and the teaching of the French language' is commissioned by the Committee of Public Safety and presented on January 1794. After describing the French language as a true revolutionary should, as the best language in the world and the one most apt to convey sublime messages of liberty, Barère likens "linguistic diversity to everything counter-revolutionary and despicable, and the equation of linguistic and national loyalty." In a famous vituperation, Barère declares: "Federalism and superstition speak Breton; emigration and hatred of the Revolution speak German; counter-revolution speaks Italian, and fanaticism speaks Basque." (McDonald, 32) In June of the same year, Abbé Grégoire complains that, after the disposal of Provinces in favor of Departments, "we still have about thirty *patois* which remind us of their names." (McDonald, 33) The crusade for French has thus changed rationales: all other contenders shall be eradicated, not only out of practicality but for ideological reasons! The Barère

report accompanies a bill of law, which is passed. The law appoints special teachers of French in the areas where it is not yet in common use[10].

The Consulate and the Empire periods were very important for schooling in general but did not specifically bring any change to the language issue.

The Nineteenth Century

The *Loi Guizot* initiates the reform in 1833. It decrees that every town in the kingdom shall open a *boys'* school, assuming "that the learning of French was to be a paramount aim, although the text of the law did not explicitly stipulate that French was to be the medium of instruction." (McDonald, 36) In 1850, the *Loi Falloux* granted the clergy more influence in school administration in exchange for a promise to use French in religious instruction. But, before the ultimate education reform of the century, the stage is set for a last military conquest.

Allegedly fervent for a united Italy, in 1858, Emperor Napoleon III is the object of an assassination attempt by Italian patriot Felice Orsini, supposedly for betraying youthful ideals and abandoning the country to its Austrian exploiters. According to the official version of the facts, "[...] l'empereur, ému, accédant aux volontés dernières du condamné, se décida enfin à intervenir en Italie." (Rougerie, 85)[11] The French historian expresses doubts about the romantic pathos of this rationalization; he suggests instead that Italy is a notorious example of that Europe built at the Vienna Congress to replace the empire of Napoleon I. Napoleon III chooses the king of Piedmont as the future monarch of a pro-French united Italy. The Treaty of Plombières is signed with Cavour, the king's Prime-Minister. This plan is very unpopular with the French nation... The Italian campaign of 1859 comes close to a defeat; only Austrian blunders insure the French Emperor a mediocre victory. The great powers demand the cessation of hostilities. The grand promises of Plombières are not kept: French alliance gains only Lombardy for the king of Piedmont. The Italians will later achieve their own unity. In 1860, Piedmont pays cheerlessly the price agreed on: Savoy (speaking

[10] The State pays these teachers, contrarily to the rest of public school faculty at the time, thus emphasizing the Republic's commitment to the civic value of a national language; they are moreover expected to read the laws to the population every *decadi* (the resting day of the Revolutionary week), which poses them as government men

[11] *The emperor, moved, decided at last to act in Italy to satisfy the last wishes of the executed man.*

Franco-Provençal) and the County of Nice (speaking a dialect of *Occitan*).

From the mythical carolingian origins of public education and through the XIXth century, religious instruction, monthly bills to parents and wide absenteism at harvest times have been three permanent features definitely missing from the current French national schools, proudly 'laïques, gratuites et obligatoires' (secular, free and compulsory) as the cliché wants them to be. This momentous change takes place in the last score of years of the century.

The Third Republic will fulfill the revolutionary intentions for public education. Jules Ferry, *ministre de l'Instruction publique* then *Président du Conseil* is the main architect of this important school reform. The primary schools become free in 1881 and in 1882 schooling turns compulsory and secular. The clergy is banned from public education. (McDonald, 39n) The instructors who are most prone to use local languages in their discipline are thus removed from the school environment.

This setback in the status of the local languages is especially regrettable as a positive cultural trend is taking place just after the divisive Revolution. Romanticism has chosen to celebrate all the minority tongues and cultures as examples of free creations as opposed to societal alienations. "Whereas during the French Revolution the abbé Grégoire had sought to uproot local languages and customs for the sake of national unity, in the romantic aftermath of the revolutionary era, first the *Académie Celtique* (founded 1804) and then its successor, the *Société Royale des Antiquaires de France*, (founded 1814) published materials on folklore with a more appreciative perspective." (Lebovics, 145)

This was a mixed blessing, as the same cutural critic continues to explain, "[O]ften at the cost of suppressing the pluralism of living local dialects, regionalists, who tended to come from the educated *petite bourgeoisie*, created societies to cultivate *the* reconstructed regional language, the correct use of which they regulated." (Lebovics, 146) It seems that the unfortunate local tongues are left no free escape: if not destroyed by French, they are to be censored by (French) purists! Referring to a typical landmark of the Breton landscape, *Préhistoire de la Bretagne* indicates: "La dénomination de **menhir** s'est imposée sous la plume des celtomanes de la fin du XVIIIe siècle, mais il n'est pas certain que son origine soit l'emploi populaire." (Giot, 385-386)[12] The local name for these monoliths, according to the same scientist, would

[12] *The name of menhir was made common by the works by Celtophiles at the end of the XVIIIth century,*

rather be *peulvan* (pillar) or *men sao* (standing stones)...

The Twentieth Century

At the beginning of the new century, France knows an intensity of ideological conflicting rarely equaled: l'*affaire Dreyfus* is typical. Another notorious example is the case of the Separation of Church and State. *Président du Conseil* Émile Combes has a law passed that expells religious orders from state-owned buildings and terminates payment for the clergy (1903). The law is immediately enforced by local constables. The rural reaction to this move is comparable to the one caused by the revolutionary demand for an oath of allegiance to the Republic by priests. The scars of this law are barely healing almost a century after the event.

American readers may fail to realize the impact of this Republican decree if they assume that Separation of Church and State, included as it is in the Constitutions of both France and the United States, will eventually cause similar attitudes.

French residents are sometimes irritated at the mildness and inconsequence of this principle as it is applied in the United States: it seems to boil down to a proliferation of clergymen of various denominations at official functions, instead of the one for an established religion. They are not surprised by the resulting vacuity of pious pronouncements uttered in the spirit of tiptoeing between the represented dogmas so as not to scandalize any believer! It is equally sure that their American counterparts deem French secularism very drastic indeed. To the option of limiting oneself to ineffectual words, words, words, complete silence is preferred. Moreover, the ideological vigor of the French laicists encourages them to turn this silence from perfect neutrality into absolute antagonism to all things spiritual... Recently, energy that could have been channeled into curriculum development was fervently spent by the French public school faculty on an ethical shibboleth. It was the urgent matter of forbidding islamic female students to sport traditional mantillas at school, thus banning one way to display religious affiliation. In the name of freedom of religion, naturally! Unless the *corps enseignant* wishes to guard against competition that Christianity they have bitterly fought for over a century...

The level of the rhetoric used at this mundane occasion leaves us to imagine the direr commitments

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but is it of vernacular origin? Far from sure...

created by a more fundamental verdict.

Naturally the decree does not directly concern language but, very often, religious instruction and church matters are the only business conducted in the local mother tongue. And now, the provincial people spontaneously associate their *own* language with sedition just as the Barère report suggests over a hundred years before! The Roman Catholic Church is singled out, as the one previously established and as a strong source of conservatism. The Protestant South has lived through a long tradition of religious state oppression and does not respond so loudly. The variation between local reactions may rationalize the political difference reported in *The Social Origins of Political Regionalism*: "Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the West has remained identified with the political Right, while the Mediterranean has been identified with the political Left." (Brustein, 123)

In fact, during *l'entre-deux-guerres* and the *Occupation*, support for native languages is mostly associated with clericalism and conservatism. In many areas there are unfortunate examples showing collusion between cultural activism and either the occupants or French fascism. The Vichy regime favors the local tongues; it is a conspicuous way to mark a difference from the blatant pro-French exclusivism of the hated Republic and it suits its famous slogan, *Retour à la terre* (Back to the Land).

Among the *Basque* language and culture proponents, the conservative and clerical element is very dominant before WWII. That is why Abbé Pierre Lafitte produces a publication written in Basque in 1934 named *Aintzina* (Forward). It becomes notorious for its complete opposition to the French government, particularly when the latter becomes *Front Populaire*. Surprisingly, it keeps absolute silence over the calamities of the Spanish Basques during the Civil War[13], probably because of their purely tactical alliance with the Communists against Franco. Young Eugène Goyheneche is a close associate of Lafitte, until *Aintzina* stops publication in 1937. But Goyheneche revives it in 1942, probably tempted by the professed regionalism of the Vichy government. He soon realizes it to be a mere facade to attract antidemocratic provincials and prefers to meet directly with ethnic collaborationists from other parts of France: Bretons of the *Breiz Atao* persuasion, Flemings who are hostile to France and pro-Nazi Alsatians (see Jacob, 113). His own involvement into collaborationalism is remote, limited to wild enthusiasm when meeting German bascophone linguists.

[13] Basques on both sides of the border prefer the denominations *South-* or *North-Basques*.

He merely advised his readership to keep one option open in case the Germans win the war and consider a partition of France after their victory. Arrested in 1945, Goyheneche is sentenced to hard labor for life; but the case against him is so weak that he gets released after 3 years.

Abbé Gantois, a vocal promotor of Flemish since 1926 when he founded the *Vlaamsch Verbond* (Flemish Union), imitated the pro-Nazi attitude of some Belgian antidemocratic Flemings. When Adolf Hitler comes to power in Germany (1933), Gantois wrote to him a personal letter, in which he proposed the unification of Germany and West Flanders. (Le Roy Ladurie (h), 30) At the Liberation, he is briefly incarcerated; but it is recognized that his officious invitation to annex the *département du Nord* caused no great harm as it has never left the Lille post office! The Church materializes some safe vicarial position for him, far from Flanders. He is, however, viewed with shame by many activists of Flemish.

Among supporters of the *Breton* language, the same discomfort is evoked by *Breiz Atao* (Brittany Forever), a periodic (mostly written in French) that has been fighting for Breton nationalism since the beginning of the XXth century. The Nationalist Breton Party is an emanation of this trend. Its version of cultural identity slowly aligns itself with the Nazi program: "[t]he Celtic State they envisaged was to be protected from the 'contamination' of Jews, Negroes, Arabs, and Latins (including, in the last, the Occitans and the rest of France)." (McDonald, 123) During the war, NBP members try to sabotage French mobilization efforts: Olier Mordrel and Fanch Debauvais leave France for Berlin. They give speeches in POW camps, inviting Breton soldiers to act as scouts for a German invasion of Brittany in 1940. "For all their efforts, [they] were able to persuade fewer than 150 Bretons to join them in their journey to Brittany, [...] no more than shirkers from military duty or unsophisticated peasant conscripts who wanted to return home whatever the cost." (Reece, 153) In Rennes in 1943, Célestin Lainé organized an armed group of militants but was unable to wheedle the *Oberkommando der Wehrmacht* authorization to wear a special Breton uniform. "The Germans turned down these requests and offered instead to enroll the *Bezen Perrot* (Formation Perrot - named after a Breton collaborationist 'martyr') in the *Waffen-SS*." (Reece, 165) They were actually engaged against local *résistants*. Acceptance of this bid thoroughly disgraces separatism for a long time to come! And it caused a French reaction that was quite disproportionate. All kinds of people were arrested and denied civil rights under the pretext of collaboration with the ennemy when they had

merely been militants in nationalist organizations.

AN IDEOLOGICAL TURNABOUT IN LINGUISTIC ACTIVISM

First Half of the Century: Regionalism

The liberation in 1945 represented a great sea-change in provincial activism. We have seen in a great number of examples that struggling for minority languages was seldom only a linguistic matter: more often than not, the actual goal sought was to promote traditional life-styles, religious practice and conservative political issues. All of which bathing in the sentimental aura which 'slumming' intellectuals assume to be highly popular with disadvantaged groups; none of this was decided by natives, of course, but by educated outsiders who monopolized the right to speak for them. Often when regionalism tried very hard to discover the genuine attributes of the provinces it favored, it was primarily in order to posit that a synthesis of all these values mixed together would define an image of True France[14]. This search for basics is named *essentialism* and can be illustrated by the life and works of its vocal spokesman during the first half of the XXth century, Louis Marin (1871-1960).

"Louis Marin, head of two leading anthropology societies, president for many years of the most powerful colonial society, and chief [...] of the major far-right party in the Chamber, embodied in his historical personality the major qualities of the far-right of the Third Republic in the interwar years." (Lebovics, 13) He started as a gentlemanly researcher and anti-Semitic novelist but politics was his real domain. A long time *deputé* for his native Lorraine (practically from 1907 to 1951), he represented the type of politician the left wing feared intensely: he presumed that his Lorraine birthright gave him the moral edge of martyrdom on whatever issue connected with patriotism. He was an ultra-nationalist member of conservative governments after WWI (he refused voting for the Versailles Treaty, too lenient for Germany in his view!). After the Feb. 6, 1934 rightist demonstration, he blames it...on governmental blunders. Needless to say Marin was soundly Catholic and conservative. For him, morality was expected to guide politics into correct paths and ethnography[15] to inform us on optimal solutions that invariably consisted in replications of the Good

[14] Let us not forget that Alphonse Daudet, the smiling Occitan regionalist of *Les Lettres de mon moulin*, also wrote the jingoistic "La dernière classe", where attachment to the vernacular was censured as unpatriotic. (See Lafont, 213)

[15] He somehow distrusted the name of *anthropology*.

Old times. Before him, Émile Durkheim, also a native of Lorraine and the pioneer of the social sciences, anthropology, sociology, wanted to enrich the republican spirit with his knowledge. Marin was considered the right-wing Durkheim of his time. He teaches ethnography at the *École des Sciences Politiques*. His principles are not very different from those held by his friends, Maurice Barrès (another nationalist writer from Lorraine) and Charles Maurras (head of *l'Action Française*). He is eager to find which features of the French identity are worthy of constituting True France and which are not. When the Defeat takes place in 1940, Marin is a perfect candidate for the Vichy cabinets: he admires provincial virtues provided they owe nothing to the scorned republic, exactly the same attitude as the one of *l'État Français*. Unfortunately, Marin's famed anti-German stance bars him from being a party to an institution constantly wheeling and dealing with the Occupants; he is a trusted adviser but cannot hold an official position. This changes dramatically in 1944, when Marin gets suspended from the diverse positions he held, flees to England and becomes forthwith a war-long *résistant*. But after his return with General de Gaulle, his political carreer will end when his faithful Nancy constituency prefers to vote for the popular Abbé Pierre in 1951. (Lebovics, 12-50) Should the Louis Marin personification of the perfect *régionaliste* fail to convince the reader due to its lack of the linguistic angle which constitutes our main topic, many like-minded linguists could have been selected instead. Frédéric Mistral, the great *Provençal* poet and the writer whose name is instantly associated with minority languages in France, was a fervent member of Marin's *Fédération Régionaliste Française*; he was very actively promoting its dogmas and shared the same strongly-polarized friends with him. "The search for the *pays réel* was launched in its early-twentieth century cultural and political incarnations by Charles Maurras, Maurice Barrès, his friend, and Frédéric Mistral, to name just the most prominent." (Lebovics, 138) Charles Maurras claimed that Mistral was no less a French nationalist as a Provençal patriot. "And in fact the poet did belong to the right-radical *Ligue de la Patrie Française*." (Lebovics, 144) None of this prevented Mistral from being the most important actor in the revitalization of the minor languages, not only *Occitan*, whose *Provençal* dialect he made famous by creating the *Félibrige*, a literary society, but also the other tongues which took advantage of the example poised by Mistral.

Second Half of the Century: Pluralism

According to Lebovics, the decline of essentialistic *colonialism* in modern France can be traced to four

reasons. Which we could include in our study of the incomplete assimilation of provinces, since these were also conquered (at an earlier time for most - if it matters...). Let us dub this policy of annexations *protocolonialism*.

First of all, the prestige of France has noticeably decreased with the 1940 defeat. In some cases, regions in the Occupation Zone were obliged to face the military occupants on their own, without 'help' from the French central government. Likewise, nowadays, provinces are often glad to resort directly to European administration witout any mediation from France. Of course, the European Community is also a distant master but the provinces may prefer to deal with an anonymous entity, safely deprived of any emotional prestige, past or charisma!

Second, even during the period when regionalism reigned supreme, the republican principle was present, under the guise of Durkheim's successors. Naturally they used too their own version of essentialism, in which predominance of the French language and schooling was a *sine qua non*, but the republican spirit is more congenial to a dose of *mondialisme* (internationalism) than is paranoid regionalism. Just like the Durkheimites survived a long exile from the cultural scene, you can find nowadays belated regionalists who also care very loudly for things having little to do with any particular region, the adherents of the *Front National* of Jean-Marie Le Pen.

Third, regionalism got a negative image out of contamination by the Vichy regime. It is true that many of the right-wing politicians who formed this system of government were sincere essentialists and produced regionalistic advances that had been ignored by three republics. But the fundamental disgrace of the regime brought down with itself all its deeds, good or bad. And contemporary examples showed very clearly that separatism at all costs was an extremely dangerous priority.

Fourth, a fine tuning of personality may have taken place. People, now, tend to focus more on individuals than groups. It is more revealing for a person to define her identity as a woman, a mother, a technician than as a Gascon or an Alsatian. It should be pointed out that many of these attributes open up an economic Marxian view of society, expanding widely beyond the regional, which lies now safely in the past of modern nationals. In his last book *l'Identité Française*, Fernand Braudel comments on acculturation problems (Braudel, 193-200). But they are no longer assimilation difficulties for people from the provinces

who fight the language, the pace, the anonymity, they are immigration problems for Maghrebines trying to be tolerated by the French. Problems have remained, they just pester different people. Are they very different? Do their victims use dissimilar strategies ? Do they meet with more complaisance?

The great obstacle to recognizing the value of non-national native languages was the French version of the republican utopia, namely that intransigent passion for declaring a nation of free men united to the point of totalitarian harmony. To make things worse, the main defenders of language activism in the past (including the recent and distressing *État Français*), were the supporters of another utopia, the conservative Golden Age. They wished to keep in their agenda the language issue, together with folklorism, peasant idyllic society, benign paternalism and everything...like it never was in the days of yore. Language was thus twice a victim of what, in *Le Pluralisme*, André Reszler describes as the modern derivatives of utopia: ideologies, the dogmas of modern monists.

According to him, two trends of thought have presided over the diverse societies in history: the monistic and the pluralistic. "Le penseur 'moniste', qui explique les choses en fonction d'une réalité connue d'avance, court le risque évident de ne jamais parvenir jusqu'aux parties."[16] (Reszler, 11) Listing civilizations run by monists: the Geneva of Calvin; the Tuscany of Savonarola; the Christianity of the Middle Ages; the IIIrd Reich of Hitler; the Soviet Union of the last seventy years, he has no trouble showing they did not fulfill what is nowadays expected of a considerate government! To this Reszler opposes the definition given by Abélard for free communication: *"diversa non adversa"*[17] (Reszler, 19) He also points out comparatively pluralistic societies of the past where one lived more freely than in those: the Greek *polis* was at least open to other pan-hellenistic issues; the Celtic society of the *civitas*, community or *pagus*, vicinity preferred the Small to the monistic Large; even the Germanic tribe was more directly available to its members than the centralized Roman Empire, especially when it became the Christian Empire. (Reszler, 28)

After the crises of the XXth century, in spite of their recurrent desire for a strong, authoritarian government, the French (and not only the language dissidents) were ready for trying a pluralistic option. Actually, even their linguistic claims had changed through the hardships of WWI, WWII, resistance, and so on. Too

[16] *The monistic thinker, explaining things according to a pre-arranged finality, runs the obvious risk of never addressing the thesis.*

[17] *Disagreement without antagonism.*

many language dissidents had suffered or died for France in the trenches or the death camps to pretend that it was not their country; separatism is still resorted to as a rhetorical threat in the debates with the 'French', because it captures attention, but every one admits it is dead. On the other hand, the real basic goal is not altered: get the reticent Republic to recognize the reality, and legitimacy, of a native language, even when it happens not to be *Langue d'oïl*. The allies too have changed. The benign conservative notables of the pre-1945 period have lost their prestige; moreover they could never have tolerated the pluralistic style of the new language activists. Those belong to another social and political class, they are issues of the Durkheimites of the past: leftish educators or intellectuals who wish to broadcast their solidarity with the rural world. But, similar to the familiarity of regionalists with the language, their expertise is often more bookish than lived-in![18] Since the pro-language fight is now led by teachers who are also believers in the republican ideology, the French state has no other option than pretending to cap the movement it resisted for so long...

The ministry for National Education translated this new attitude into laws. The **Loi Deixonne** was passed on 1.11.51. It decreed the teaching of non-Langue d'oïl languages in the provinces, stipulating a time-line of 25 years for committee studies, master formation and inclusion of the new disciplines into the Baccalauréat. But the small-print refinement is that the new languages are specifically listed as Basque, Breton, Catalan and Occitan. For over twenty years, educational authorities will claim that the law does not cover Alsatian, Corsican, Flemish, not to mention Franco-Provençal; the rationalization offered being that the law did address genuine languages and not mere dialects of foreign languages, German, Italian or Dutch! Naturally, this position was untenable, since Basque or Catalan could be also defined as local dialects of languages spoken abroad by a greater number of people...So that a law which should be cherished among language activists as the first chink in the Republican armor, is in fact loathed as a typical low trick of the wily Éducation Nationale.

In 1982 and 1983, the **Savary Regulations** emphasize the continued commitment of l'Éducation Nationale to the teaching of local languages. This time, no discrimination is made among 'languages' and 'dialects', so these regulations apply even to languages spoken in whatever form elsewhere! The Regulations

[18] See the hilarious telling of the *merci/trugarez* Breton teaching controversy. (McDonald, 164-167)

define the philosophy of this 'voluntary' subject matter and the methodologies it is directed to follow at the different stages of public education. Are the language dissidents pleased? Well, those Regulations are not a law; breaking them is only a professional misdemeanor, not a civil crime... The vigilance of the activists may be hypercritical but experience has proven the French state to be a recurrent offender in that respect. Other bills are waiting to be considered by the Parliament.

Committed educators, like Bonnemason, are prompt to emphasize that those administrative improvements are only gestures and that a strong political will is to be expressed by voters if they want to make the governmental attitude reverse completely. (Bonnemason, 42)

Do the beneficiaries of these efforts garner ample profits from them? This group, silent by nature before 1945 as it is now, was lucky enough to be represented by self-appointed (French or Frenchified) intellectuals with experience in what ideology misunderstood communities ought to accept or reject for their language.

In order to bring the discussion back to the level of the concerned population, let us consider the position held by Claude Hagège, Professor in the *Collège de France*, at a public colloquium on the issue, "Should one teach English or Breton to Middleschool students?"

"Si l'on admet que l'anglais [...] est une langue que l'enfant francophone apprendra, il n'y a pas lieu de se hâter.

En sorte que le breton ayant une justification bien plus profonde [...], ça ne fait aucun doute que je choisirais le breton pour mes enfants. L'anglais vous rattrapera toujours, il n'y a aucune raison de se précipiter sur lui."[19] (Bonnemason, 46)

Here is the reaction of an intellectual to what is a serious problem for the family of a learner. Of course, if he or she lives in the surroundings of a *Collège de France* linguist, mastering English will be a piece of cake: there are so many cognates, so much is familiar in the grammar! But then, English is so...ordinary, don't you think? But if, as the first child in a family to stay in school after the *Certificat d'Études*, one

[19] *"If you consider that English [...] is a language a French-speaking child has got to learn, no reason for hurrying.*

Breton, on the other hand, has much deeper connections, [...] no doubt I would select it for my kids. English will end up catching you anyway, no need to rush at it."

is hesitating between working for the Roscoff Ferry Boats or the Social Works in Brest, the matter is quite different...

As Reszler points out, "Le penseur pluraliste n'est pas certain de parvenir jusqu'à une notion parfaitement maîtrisée de la réalité. Mais c'est un risque qu'il tend à assumer sans déplaisir."[20] (Reszler, 11n) This is a responsibility intellectual advisers of any walk of life should contemplate earnestly and over which, maybe, they could manage to conjure out a few qualms. Thank God, really uneducated people may have more common sense than to grant such intellectuals total control over their lives!

Let us now survey the diverse linguistic minorities of native French people.

The evolution of this minority language will be considered on its own, not only in rapport with the *Langue d'oïl* development. The image of the minority will also be viewed through the eyes of the French majority, as it happens to be the only ethnic contribution the author, a majority member, can tender: although not a member of any minority, he can still reveal slurs attached to it by the national collective 'wisdom'! The short language specimens are selected from sources available here. Depending on its author's teaching persuasion, each of them may appear clear or obscure to particular readers. They are credited 'After X', because their comments (if any) were changed in order to address an English-speaking readership: no need to caution such readers that Breton articles do not reflect the genders of nouns, since the same indiscrimination is regular in English... They are not then mere translations of the original hints for French readers, and constitute the only part of the 'language lessons' for which authorial responsibility may be claimed or blamed.

[20] *The pluralistic thinker is not sure ever to reach a perfectly mastered concept of reality. But this risk he tends to take without a qualm.*"

THE ALSATIAN MINORITY

Some Language Exposure[21].

Alsatian Language: First Lesson.

Counting 1 to 100.

1	2	3	4
Eins	**Zwei**	**Drëi**	**Vier**
5	6	7	8
Fenf	**Sex**	**Seve**	**Acht**
9	10	11	12
Nin	**Zehn**	**Elf**	**Zwelf**
13	14	15	16
Drizehn	**Vierzehn**	**Fuffzehn**	**Sêchzehn**
17	18	19	20
Sevezehn	**Achtzehn**	**Ninzehn**	**Zwanzig**
21	22	23	24
Ein-e-zwanzig	**Zwei-e-zwanzig**	**Drëi-e-zwanzig**	**Vier-e-zwanzig**
30	40	50	60
Drissig	**Viersig**	**Fuffzig**	**Sêchzig**

[21] After Elsa Laugel-Erny's *Cours d'alsacien*, quoted in Gaquin, 71 - 73.

70	80	90	100
Sevezig	**Achtzig**	**Ninzig**	**Hundert**

Well Zitt isch wenn's beliebt? *What time is it?*

or **Wieviel Uhr isch?**

Alsatian	*English*
Es isch elfe.	*It is eleven o'clock.*
Es isch fenf Minute noch elfe.	*It is five past eleven.*
Es isch halb zwelfe.	*It is half past eleven.*
Es isch Middaa.	*It is noon.*
Es schlaat zwelfe.	*It rings twelve.*

Alsatian Language Lesson 2

Verb Sin *(to Be).*

Int.	**Wie alt bisch Du?**	*How old are you?*
Aff.	**Ich bin fuffzehn Johr alt.**	*I am fifteen years old.*
Masc.	**Wie alt isch er? Er isch 30 Johr alt.**	*How old is he? He is 30.*
Fem.	**Wie alt isch sie? Sie isch 25 Johr alt.**	*How old is she? She is 25.*
Neut	**Wie alt isch's? Es isch 1 Johr alt.**	*How old is he or she? (a baby) He or she is one ear old.*
Int.	**Wie alt sin Ihr?** *(colloquial)*	*How old are you? (sg. or pl.)*
Aff.	**Ich bin vierzig Johr alt.**	*I am 40.*
	Mir sin vierzig Johr alt.	*We are 40.*

Int.	**Wie alt sin sie?**	*How old are they?*
Aff.	**Sie sin sevezig Johr alt**	*They are 70.*
Form.	**Wie alt sin Sie wenn's beliebt?**	*How old are you, please?*
Sg.	**Ich bin fenf-e-sevezig Johr alt.**	*I am 75.*
Pl.	**Mir sin fenf-e-sevezig Johr alt.**	*We are 75.*

History and Geography.

The traditional *franchouillard*[21] reflex would be to request a study of the whole *Alsace-Lorraine* block. This would perpetuate what has been blamed as 'Bismarck's tragic error': "L'annexion bismarckienne de Metz, depuis toujours purement latine, romane, française, ne tenait sous aucun prétexte." (Le Roy Ladurie (a), 45)[22] There is little trace of the German culture in Lorraine. In fact, whatever Germanic vernacular is remaining in northern *Moselle* dates back from the Merovingian Franks: *(francique)*, before the existence of any *Reich* of the Holy Roman Empire or of a German state. The rest of Lorraine always used plain *Langue d'oïl*. The Germanism of *Alsace*, however, is a much more real fact.

A province in the Ancien Régime, *Alsace* is now an Administrative Region with a population of 1 600 000, made of the two *départements* of *Haut-Rhin* and *Bas-Rhin*. The principal Alsatian cities are Strasbourg, Colmar and Mulhouse. A very industrious (Gutenberg pionéered printing in Strasbourg in 1448) and wealthy part of Rhineland, Alsace has a history of wars and conquests by its two powerful neighbors, Germany and France; Alsatian heritage and language document this. The language is a dialect (Gm: *Platt*) of German; it belongs to the *alémanique* family of West Germanic dialects, which means that it sounds more like those spoken in Switzerland than like others of the Rhineland. According to *Linguistic Minorities in Western Europe*, some 1 300 000 Alsatians could speak the dialect in 1975. (Stephens, 341)

Assigned to Lothaire by the treaty of Verdun in 843, Alsace was a strategic link of the Holy Germanic

[21] Derogatory and colloquial attribute referring to the failings traditionally attributed to the French petit-bourgeois: narrow-mindedness and, *like here*, jingoism.

[22] *The annexation of Metz by Bismarck, a city which had for ever been Latinate, Romance, French, made no sense.*

Empire with its Italian possessions and the Mediterranean in the Middle-Ages. Early humanists of the Renaissance were active in the cities promoting Luther's Reformation. The farmers usually remained Catholic but participated in the 1525 Peasant Revolt, demanding the end of the social liabilities of feudalism. They were defeated by Imperial forces and the Alsatian bourgeoisie. Alsace suffered during the Thirty Years' War and became part of Louis XIV's kingdom after the treaty of Westphalia of 1648. It benefitted from Louis XIV's adage: "Not to interfere with Alsatian customs." This direction was applied for four centuries by different French regimes! Provided France was granted total political control, the province could enjoy some relative economical freedom. Alsace lost all self-governing institutions gained during eight long centuries under the Empire but it was more or less at peace until the end of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, while the French bureaucracy was running the province. This may not seem too liberal to most readers of federal origins but no other French-annexed territory could claim as much...

At the defeat of France in 1871, the treaty of Frankfurt gave back Alsace and part of Lorraine to the German Empire. Under the German annexation, the higher bourgeoisie resisted assimilation into the German culture and many exiled themselves to France. The working classes, without marking any undue enthusiasm for the Kaiser's Empire, certainly appreciated its more liberal social climate. But *Peuples et langues de France* claims that "German civil servants and immigrants in general were usually treated with civility in the work place, avoided outside it." (Gaquin, 59) Struggle for autonomy continued through the German occupation. Many cultural changes (compulsory renaming certain places and streets in German) manifested a real desire to 'germanize' Alsace. The First World War occurred in 1914, officially motivated by ardent popular fervor to liberate the Alsatians. After victory by the Allies, the treaty of Versailles duly reintegrated Alsace into France in 1919.

Alsace returned to the French IIIrd Republic, quite different from the Second Empire it left. Faithful to Louis XIV's principle, France did not enforce there the Separation of Church and State nor the educational changes that had become legal on the whole territory in the meantime. The search for an Alsatian identity, originated under the Germans, continued with the French Republic, resulting in a string of trials for high treason by separatism. But the German invasion in 1940 gave a new twist to Alsatian history.

Alsace was, once again, annexed by Germany. This time, it was not even mentioned in any treaty: the

June armistice agreement did not include any particular disposition for Alsace-Lorraine. The Nazi invaders felt confident germanization could be completed in a few years: "the French language was banned in a number of detailed edicts. All personal names had to be Germanised [...], French books were burned in public, the 'Basque beret' was prohibited [...], concentration camps were built at Schimerk [sic] and Struthof for those trying to avoid conscription in the armies of the *Reich*." (Stephens, 351). This World War too was won by the Allies. Like in 1918, reintegration was not without problem in 1945, but the recent excesses of the Occupants made the French task easier. The second half of the XXth century made of Alsace a central place for the European experience. The European Community Parliament meets in Strasbourg. Alsace plays a very important part in the harmonious development of all the countries centered on the Rhine river, Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands.

The Alsatian Language in Education.

The dialect is obviously one important way to express Alsatian identity, a value that is especially fragile considering the cultural and linguistic history of the province. Constantly challenged on their names, accent, the Alsatians never feel completely French. They had the same problem when they were considered German subjects: a recurrent fear, then, was *Verhochdeutschung*, the 'consolidation' of their dialect into proper High German. They have to watch again over an insidious devaluation of their speech by fellow countrymen.

There is certainly no need to worry over the share given High German in education. Alsatian students are reputed for getting the most enviable rewards for German in the French high schools. French students attend 4 hours a week of classroom meetings for their 'First Foreign Language' in G7, G8 and G9. 12% of them select German as their first foreign language, 60% of the students in the Strasbourg School District do...Since 1975, 2 hrs a week of first foreign language are offered to primary shools students in G3 and G4.

The position of German is not then threatened. Moreover, international bartering regularly takes place between French and German school authorities, during which the French hope to get better teaching of their national language in Germany by offering to reciprocate; and they expect the Alsatians to be gratified by the deal. When, in fact, they repeat that while it is commendable for the French to teach High German (of course, no system of education will select to teach a dialect with no national communicative value), it is not **their** language. Nobody wants to take this regional idiom seriously.

Until PTAs volunteered to create 5 experimental classes in nursery schools where the local dialect (not High German) is used 13 hours a week. These classes are funded partly by the Regional Services and partly by the European Community. Probably challenged by this initiative, the French Ministry of Education planned to open two nursery-schools in 1992 where local idiom and French would be used at equal time.

That is the least France could do for a 'minority' language that is understood by 93 million Europeans!

THE BRETON MINORITY

Some Language Exposure[23]

	Kentel II (daou).	*Lesson 2.*
	Diviz	*Dialog*
Lan	**Setu Mona. Merc'h ar mestr-skol eo. Ur verc'h vrav eo Mona.**	*Here is Mona. She is the schoolteacher's daughter. Mona is a fine girl.*
Anna	**E porzh ar skol emañ : ur skol vihan eo skol an aotrou Kere.**	*She is in the school yard. Mr Quéré's school is a small school.*
Lan	**Yannig ivez a zo e porzh ar skol. Ur paotr brav eo Yannig. Mab ur pesketour eo.**	*Yannig is also in the school yard. Yannig is a fine boy. He is the son of a fisherman.*
Anna	**Ya, pesketour eo tad Yannig. Ha micherourez eo mamm Yannig.**	*Yes, Yannig's dad is a fisherman. And Yannig's mother is a factory worker.*

Gerioù		*Vocabulary*	
an, ar, al	*the*	**bihan**	*small, little*
brav	*fine, beautiful*	**da**	*your*
e	*in, on*	**eo, emañ, a zo**	*is*
mab	*son*	**mamm**	*mother*
merc'h	*daughter, girl*	**mestr-skol**	*schoolteacher*
micherourez	*female worker*	**paotr**	*boy*
pesketour	*fisherman*	**porzh**	*yard*
setu	*here is, are*	**skol**	*school*
tad	*father*	**un, ur, ul**	*a, an*

[23] After Per Denez. *Brezhoneg... buan hag aes.* pp. 32 - 39.

Yezhadur *Grammar*

Articles

In Breton, there is a definite article **an**; *an aotrou Kere*: Mr. Quéré, **ar**; *ar mor*: the sea, **al**; *al levr*: the book, and an indefinite article **un**; *un den*: a man, **ur**; *ur skol*: a school, **ul**; *ul levr*: a book. The selection of articles depends only on the *initial letter* of the following Noun. Then, **an, un** are used before **n, d, t, h** and **vowels**; **al, ul** before **l**; **ar, ur** before all other consonants.

Possessive Case

Breton lacks the Genitive mark **'s** of English. It uses a mere juxtaposition of nouns; first the noun for who or what is 'owned' (no article allowed), then the noun for who or what is the 'owner' (articles allowed).

merc'h ar mestr-skol	*the schoolteacher's daughter.*
mab ur pesketour	*a fisherman's son.*
tad Yannig	*Yannig's father*

Mutations

In the Romance languages, gender agreement is shown by the choice of article and the ending of modifying adjectives. We have seen that Breton articles are not selected this way; as to the agreement in adjectives (always following the noun), it shows (when it does) not in the *final* but in the *initial* of the adjective. The *mutation* indicates that the noun is *feminine* (and that the concerned initial consonant is mutable). Mutation is the marking for the feminine gender: it does not occur in the masculine.

ur paotr	masc. noun *(paotr)*, no mutation
ur verc'h	fem. noun *(merc'h)* mutation of initial **m** to **v**.
ur verc'h vrav	the adjective **brav** indicates an agreement in the feminine by mutation of initial **b** to **v**.

All consonants are not mutable. For instance, **l** is not; no mutation occurs for the feminine NounPhrase **ul labouradeg**: a factory. But, if an adjective with a mutable initial **(bihan)** follows, it will mutate **ul labouradeg vihan**: a small factory. Mutations B to V and M to V should be noted. There are many more.

Verb To Be, 3rd Sg Present

The forms **a zo** and **eo** serve as 'copulas', namely to connect predicative adjectives or NounPhrases and

Subjects. But while the subject precedes **a zo**, it should follow **eo**.

ar mor a zo glas. *the sea is blue.*

brav eo an amzer. *the weather is fine.*

When 'is' indicates a *location*, it should be rendered with **emañ**.

pelec'h emañ Yannig ?*where is Yannig?*

e porzh emañ Mona. *Mona is in the yard.*

emañ cannot be preceded by the subject; if one is expressed, it should follow.

History and Geography.

Brittany too was a Province in the *Ancien Regime* and has become the *Région administrative de Bretagne* of the French Republic, with a population of 2 800 000, 500 000 to 1 000 000 of whom can probably speak Breton *(Br.: Brezhoneg)*; due to the absence of reliable census on the topic of other languages in France, we have to make do with informal and possibly biased evaluations. It covers the territories of the four *départements* of *Finistère*, *Côtes-du-Nord*, *Morbihan* and *Ille-et-Vilaine*. The *département* of *Loire-Atlantique* was part of Brittany at the time of Provinces, but not included into this Region; since it never made use of the Breton language, anyway, we are not expected to study it. Historically, the linguistic border has changed somewhat through the ages but relatively little: it never reached Rennes, for instance. (cf. Bonnemason, 17) It corresponds roughly to the division between *Breizh-Izel*, Lower Brittany and *Breizh-Uhel*, Upper Brittany. French is spoken to the east of this line, with a *Langue d'oïl patois* named *gallo* (or *gallot* or *gallec)*, and Breton to the west. This is the more Celtic part of Brittany where culture was less influenced by the French culture. Romanticism in the nineteenth century has been particularly taken with the intense atmosphere of *le 'mystère breton'* and tourists are still seriously hunting for it, their *Guide de la Bretagne mystérieuse* (Le Scouëzec) at hand (not only the French), while patience is wearing thin among the locals who would welcome more attention to their actual problems.

Brittany, the western promontory of France jutting into the Atlantic, is a hilly country surrounded by moors and a rugged coast where the sea is usually very spectacular. There is a great number of megaliths on these moors, *(menhirs*, standing stones; *dolmens*, stone tables; *cromlechs*, groups of dolmens forming a gallery in a half-circle); although they strongly contribute to the general sense of mystère breton, they were

by no means products of the Celts. Dating from the 2 000 B.C., they were already standing when the Celts emigrated to this part of Europe.

The Celtic migration was indeed a two-timed affair. First tribes called Gauls came all over what is now French territory in the ninth century B.C.; we can surmise *Armorica* was never densely populated, because more attractive areas were available. Then, after the Gallo-roman period, beginning in the fifth century A.D., another Celtic invasion took place. They were people displaced from their native lands in western *Brittania* by the Angles, Jutes and Saxons and they were looking for a new country, led by their clergy and tribal chiefs. Was their arrival peaceful or aggressive? We have no evidence for the one or the other, but either opinion is held by different ethnic cultural experts, out of purely ideological reasons! Parenthetically, McDonald reports a notorious hostility between the two Celtic departments teaching Breton culture in Britanny; would they share a common position on this divisive issue? She observes that 'Brest' claims some kind of collaboration took place between migrants and local Gauls, while 'Rennes' admits that performing ethnic cleansing had to be a part of the colonists' burden in 'winning the west' for the Bretons[23]. In any case, linguistic interference differentially occurred between continental (Gaulish) and insular (Cornish, Welsh) Celtic tongues. This is why we have nowadays four major local Bretons: the dialects of Quimper, Leon and Tregor (K, L, T) in the north, and the Vannes dialect in the south, very different because more imbued with Gaulish features. The British origin of the inhabitants explains why Brittany was dubbed 'Lesser' Britain in the Middle Ages, as opposed to 'Great' Britain.

During the Dark Ages, Brittany was a duchy under the control of the Carolingian Franks. But Nominoë was elected Duke of all Brittany and defeated the French. A new independent country was born. It remained free until the end of the Middle Ages, when Duchess Anne got engaged to an Austrian Prince. France feared alliance of a neighbor with the Holy German Empire and cancellation of the engagement was demanded in 1491. Instead, Anne will be forced to marry successively two French kings, Charles VIII and Louis XII.

[23] She mentions a feast celebrating the end of a Breton Summer school at Rennes. A very popular entry was a student skit meant to symbolize the saga of the migration: "[...] The Bretons were left alone to people Armorica, however, for the Gaul, crouched like a monkey, ran away, grunting incoherently." (McDonald, 107)

"In both cases the marriage contracts recognized the right of Brittany to independence, and stipulated that the government and administration of Brittany would be separate from those of France." (Gaquin, 118) Eventually, the Parliament of Brittany was forced to sign a Treaty of Union with France in 1532. The act granted some guarantees of freedom for the Bretons but they were never implemented.

Experiencing the same fate as the other provinces of the Ancien Régime, Brittany had difficult times. The economical situation was never very good and there were local famines and hardships. The most catastrophic was the 'Revolt of the Red Bonnets' in 1675, in the reign of Louis XIV. The French bureaucracy wanted to help finance the war in the Netherlands with a new tax on stamped paper. The revolt against this measure started in the cities and involved also the peasants of Lower Brittany. The repression by Louis XIV was ruthless. A great number of Bretons were hanged, more for example than particular acts. "The trees on the main road from Quimper to Quimperlé [...] are beginning to bend under the weight upon them." (Gaquin, 367).

The Revolution was, at first, well accepted by the Bretons, who did not trust the unfulfilled promises of the French monarchy. But, after a while, they realized that the revolutionaries' beautiful liberal dreams were just as rhetorical. The compulsory oath for priests, the implacable banning of Breton for official acts, the belligerence against all Europe of the Jacobine government finally triggered the resentment of the peasantry of Lower Brittany. When the *Chouan* rebellion started in *Vendée*, a *département* at the mouth of river Loire, the west-Bretons joined it. And consequently shared the wrathful revenge of the French power.

The Bretons tried however to express their faithfulness to France in all the most drastic circumstances. The Napoleonic wars, the two World Wars offered opportunities to prove their love for their adoptive country. The contemporary Breton autonomism is a product of the late XIXth century (Le Roy Ladurie (c), 43). But we have seen what disgrace the treason of a few brought to nationalism. There is indeed a certain reluctance among the French to accept an ideal that vents itself too fast in bombings and other acts of terrorism. Fortunately, General de Gaulle remembered that his first 'converts', at the time of June 1940 in London, were Bretons and the Fifth Republic gave Brittany a special priority in the renewing of roads, telephone and railroads; all sectors which were in disarray, anyway.

The Breton Language in Education.

According to an interview with Prof. Per Denez, Head of Breton Studies at Rennes University, in *Peuples et langues de France* (Gaquin, 126-145), there is a great possibility that modern Bretons get interested in the learning of their own language and do no longer tolerate all kinds of abuse by the French. Prof. Denez addresses mostly the situation of Higher Education he knows better, of course. *Licence*, (B.A.) and *Maîtrise*, (M.A.) have been conquered after a long struggle! Apparently, the Socialists had promised to institute these degrees when they could form a government. In 1981, they did. But, once a Minister for Education was chosen, the promise was forgotten. Then, one hot month of universtary unrest went by, with protests, angry speeches and displays of public vituperations. Then, the Bretons activists circulated the rumor that, if the French could not deliver, they would occupy the *Préfecture*, (building for the *département*'s headquarters) and convoke all the medias. Suddenly, everything was recalled and four civil servants came to Prof. Denez's lecture and informed him that M.A. and B.A. in Breton were a fact. But the French never give up... The D.E.U.G. (a kind of degree certifying that an undergraduate has completed the first two years of study toward a B.A.) was not included. Dr. Denez assumed naturally that a D.E.U.G. would be included, as a preliminary to a Licence! It had not yet materialized in '87, at the time of the interview. This fine-print pettiness is what marks a country with more than a millenium of red tape under the belt! In fact, it meant that gradeschool teachers who need a D.E.U.G. but not a B.A., would never take Breton and be prepared to teach it in their schools.

There are, however, a lot of initiatives by people who want to teach Breton. For instance, half a dozen experimental bilingual classes were run in the public schools, apparently without support of the hierarchy. There are even highschools in the Paris area (where about a million Bretons have emigrated) offering Breton as a Second Modern Language and preparing the students for *Baccalauréat*, HighSchool Graduation (Breton 2nd Foreign Language). On the private side, the *Diwan* (Br.: germination) schools teach in Breton only and are organized at several; teaching levels: nursery school and primary education.[24] In '84, a C.A.P.E.S. in Breton was set up. This degree is necessary for students aiming for tenure in secondary education, teaching Breton.

[24] cf. McDonald's observations of *Diwan*, 189-218.

THE CATALAN MINORITY

Some Language Exposure[25]

Catalan Language: First Lesson.

Unitat I: Qui ets?

Saludar i identificar se.

1

El senyor Ferrer, sisplau? — **Sí, és aquell senyor.**

Moltes gràcies. — **De res.**

Senyor Ferrer? — **Jo mateix.**

Bona tarda. Miri, jo sóc en Xavier Ruiz...

2. (al telèfon)

Hola Lluís. Sóc jo, la Rosa... — **Eh? Qui ets?**

Que no ets en Lluís, tu? — **En Lluís? No, jo sóc en Miquel. Aquí no hi ha cap Lluís.**

[25] After Marta Mas's *et alia. Digui, digui*, quoted in Gaquin, 217 - 218.

3.

Bona tarda, senyora Remei. Que hi ha la Conxita?

Doncs, no, ho sento. Ja no hi és.

4. (al telèfon)

Digui? Que hi ha la senyora Garcia?

No, em sembla que s'equivoca...

5.

Perdó, com a dit? Boixaderes?

No, no. Boixeres: be, o, ics, e, erra, e, essa. Josep Boixeres i Humet.

History and Geography.

The counties of Roussillon, Valespir, Conflent and Cerdagne at the eastern end of the Pyranean mountains were part of Catalonia. They correspond nowadays with the *département* of *Pyrénées-Orientales*, with a population of 350 000 inhabitants; about 120 000 of them can understand *Catalan*, the same language also spoken in Spain by 6 000 000 people in the border-province of *Cataluña*, *(Cat.: Catalunya)* with the enviable status of being officially recognized by the state. The 'French' Catalans, whose language enjoys no specific administrative recognition, prefer to be named 'North-Catalans' and they refer to their relatives in Spain as 'South-Catalans'.

Catalonia, before annexation by France and Spain, enjoyed a brilliant history during the Middle-Ages and Renaissance. It was then famous for navigators, poets, cartographers and architects. The romance language spoken in Catalonia was then written in many books sought for their entertaining as well as informative powers. This language kept its image until the treaty of the Pyreneas in 1659, by which Louis XIV seized the northern part of Catalonia so as to complete what he viewed as the 'natural borders' of his

kingdom with Spain.

After introduction into the French kingdom, the Catalans lost control over their own government and Catalan was deliberately restricted to agricole and church business. For instance, the French Jesuits arrived in Perpignan with a monopoly over secondary education. They taught only in French and formed a corps of Perpignan bourgeois, ready for positions in the French local government; but it made them highly impopular with the rest of the Catalan population.

At the time of the Revolution, the Catalans honestly participated into the writing of local grievance reports but were very soon disappointed that the political representation remained the business of the Frenchified elites of Perpignan! Civil disobedience would have most certainly followed if Spanish troops had not crossed over the mountains in 1793. Then the French troops defeated them and the Catalans lost an opportunity to revolt. Later, they were divided about the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, "[...] until Napoleon's Concordat with the Pope ended the religious malaise of the nation." (Gaquin, 199) For the most part, the French Catalans remained indifferent to the deeds of the Revolution.

The XXth century was not marked by any great change in North-Catalonia. French was still the only means to convey any social importance, and it was still the privilege of urban bourgeoisie. Social unrest in the wine-producing enterprises, seriously outmoded and turning out low-quality products, gave a poor image to Catalonia in the end of the century.

Rebirth came in the mid-XXth century, for instance in the tourism sector with creation of marinas and destruction of the mosquitoes which bred malaria. This was accompanied by a serious educational effort: the whole population can now speak French and access more rewarding positions than unqualified work in inferior wine-growing (Le Roy Ladurie (d), 45).

The Catalan Language in Education.

According to an interesting interview with two councilors of Catalan culture in *Peuples et langues de France* (Gaquin, 203-316), inhabitants of North-Catalonia manifest a new enthusiasm for a Europe of Regions as opposed to the Europe of States (or even Nations). They also display a confident hope in their language: it is, after all, a long-authenticated language, associated with a rich culture and a nation who had a unified place in history. While other regions had to reinforce their poor self-confidence with acts of terrorism and

violence, the Catalans would be ashamed to resort to such barbarism! They take pride in their skills as peaceful negociators rather than whining martyrs.

There are many quiet initiatives to save the language, presented more as creative contributions than challenges to the French ogre: experimental teaching in two gradeschools, *la Bressola* (the Cradle) and *Arrels* (Roots) is conducted in Catalan and French. Of course, as Catalans would point out, Catalan studies have been common at the University of Perpignan, because "[...] il y a la grammaire, il y a un dictionnaire, il y a toute une morphologie linguistique ¡propre au Catalan." (Gaquin, 209)

The time is passed when schooling was the ennemy of the Catalan language. There is now a D.E.U.G., a very strategic degree, because it allows to start a Catalan schoolteachers' training program. Now, the Catalans are ready to respond to the French arrogance, pedantry for pedantry.

The '92 Olympic Games at Barcelona, capital of the *Generalitat de Catalunya*, offered great mediatic exposure to the Catalan language and informal culture. Strengthened by the example and relative success of their relatives of the South, the North-Catalans are ready to face the future with new confidence.

THE CORSICAN MINORITY

Some Language Exposure[25].

	Corsu: prima lezzione.	*Corsican Language: First Lesson.*
	Ghjunghje Santu.	*Toussaint arrives.*
1.	**O Sà! Sì ghjuntu!**	*O Toussaint! You came!*
2.	**Cumu sì, o Ghjà? In casa? Tutti bè?**	*How are you, James? At home? Everyone all right?*
3.	**A'bastanza. Ci sì pè un pezzu?**	*Well enough. Are you going to be here long (a bit)?*
4.	**Pensa! Aghju trè simane. Fin'a San Roccu, ma mistaria ancu sempre, mì!**	*Come on! I have 3 weeks. Until the day of St Rock, but I would stay for ever, why! (look).*
5.	**Quessa, a sò. Quantu ti resta à fà?**	*That I know. How long does it remain for you to do?*
6.	**Torna dui o trè anni, è po à Parigi u salutu chi l'aghju vistu ancu troppu,**	*Two or three more years, and then, good-bye to Paris, because I saw it only too much.*

Pronunciation Problems.

We tackle with the tough problems right away. On the first page, we face a trigraph (GHJ) and mutants.

Please observe the trigraph GHJ, which is also a mutant. In the lesson title, you find it twice in the same word. The first time after a period (which means sentence-initial); the second time, after a consonnant.

[25] After Pascal Marchetti's *Le Corse sans peine*, quoted in Gaquin, 286 - 288

In both cases, the sound is affricate: [dj]. In sentence 1., it is found after accent: [dj] again. But, in sentence 2., it follows neither a period, nor an accent, nor a consonant, and it is word-initial: the sound is then merely [j]. At last, in sentences 4 and 6, it follows neither period, nor accent, nor consonant and is in the middle of a word: then, it sounds like [dj] again.

Please observe the mutant S. It is found after period (sentence 1), after accent (twice in sentence 4), after consonant (sentence 4), before T (sentences 3, 4, 5, 6) and geminated (sentence 5). In all these cases, it is pronounced [s]. Elsewhere (it is found 8 more times in this text), it sounds [z].

Please, compare in the same way mutant B of sentence 2 with the one in sentence 3.

Notice that mutant P always has unvoiced pronunciation, because it is found after a period (lesson number, sentence 4), after accent (sentence 3, sentence 6 (twice)), after consonant (sentences 3, 4), or geminated (sentence 6).

You may figure out the mutating pronunciation of T, according to the same rule.

DO NOT WORRY: AFTER A FEW LESSONS, READING THE MUTANTS WILL BECOME FAMILIAR.

Remarks.

Reviewing the lesson, let's make a few comments.

Title: Please, notice the inversion, very common in Corsican. Subjects of verbs without an object do invert. We say, *arrives So-and-so, *speaks What-s-his name, and so on.

Vocatives, sentences 1, 2: Must have the prefix **O**, and the name of the person addressed must be abbreviated. You address Santu with **O Sà**; Ghjacomo with **O Ghjà**. So that **Dumè**, which seems to be a Christian name in its own right, is really the vocative for **Dumenicu**.

Dialectal Variant, sentences 2, 3: **Sì** (thou art) is a local variant; in many Corsican places, **sè** is used instead.

Apostrophe, sentence 3: Since accent is not possible on a capital letter, apostrophe is used instead. **A'** = à.

Dropping of Subjects, sentence 4: In Corsican, the subject as a personal pronoun is not expressed. Ex.: **Aghju** = I have. The pronoun is expressed only if there is emphasis or opposition.

Remarks on Sentence 6: We use the indirect object to *greet* somebody (or some personalized thing, like here). In **dui, d** is practically silent.

History and Geography.

During the monarchy, Corsica was a Province and it turned under the Vth Republic into a *Région administrative* with a (theoretical) population of 240 000 inhabitants. Since 1975, it covers 2 *départements: Haute-Corse*, chef-lieu: Bastia and *Corse-du-Sud*, chef-lieu: Ajaccio. It is the largest island on the (European) French territory. The Corsican language, very close to Italian, has two dialects, each serving more or less one of the *départements*; the one for *Haute-Corse* sounding like Tuscan, and the one for *Corse-du-Sud* more like a Sardinian dialect. It lies 112 miles from France and 50 miles from continental Italy (and 7.5 miles from Italian Sardinia!). Just as Sardinian is a romance language, different from Italian, some linguists think that a similar claim could be legitimately made for Corsican.

Corsica is a beautiful island, but it is poor in resources. Its strategic position more than the economical potential of the island explains the 25 centuries of invasions Corsica experienced. It also caused an important diaspora. *Peuples et langues de France* quotes a Corsican activist who claims there are one million Corsicans in the world, 120 000 of whom actually live in the island (the complement to 240 000 being outsiders; more credibly, Stephens suggests that many inhabitants sign the local electoral lists while working on the continent. (Stephens, 328-329)), 150 000 Corsicans live in the Paris area, 150 000 in Marseille, and the rest elsewhere, notably in Latin America. When France had many colonies, between 1860 and 1960, the Corsicans were overrepresented among colonists and civil servants. The 'colonial exile' was indeed a regular stopover in the life of a Corsican. This comfortable kind of separation from the native island has been replaced by the 'Parisian exile', much tougher. M.F. Poizat-Corsa tells the case of an *immeuble*, 117 boulevard Voltaire, where all the tenants came from the same Corsican village! (Gaquin, 280) As far as crime is concerned, Corsicans are equally numerous among criminals and lawmen. The average Frenchman can hardly understand why the plethora of *fonctionnaires* includes so many Corsicans. Little does he realize that, for a person desirous to leave a desolate place, public function is the most straightforward choice... Plenty other minorities are indeed blamed for one or another (alleged) mania, "but they have never been accused of systematically defying the law, or of having formed a *mafia* within the French administration." (Paul Sérant,

La France des Minorités quoted in Stephens, 329) This armchair sociology, however, forgets that more acts of patriotism can be credited to this minority than statistical numbers would call for.

The Corsican population was characterized as of Iberian and Celto-Ligurian origin. Settlements by Phoceans, Etruscans, Carthaginians, Vandals and Saracens were discovered by archaeologists. Eventually, Romans came and tried to establish themselves in 162 B.C., left few monumental traces, but completely reshuffled the language.

Colonization at the hands of the Byzantines took place in the VIth and VIIth centuries, but Corsica soon became the Pope's property. After the expulsion of the Saracens, the Pope entrusted the Archbishopric of Pisa with Corsica. In 1132, Genoa attacked the island for the first time. By 1359, what is now *Haute-Corse* had practically become a colony of Genoa, and the future *Corse-du-Sud* retained the feudal system.

A Corsican, mercenary for the French king, conquered Corsica from the Genoese. But diplomacy rendered this liberation useless because the treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis (1559) returned the island to them.

In 1755, Pascal Paoli organized resistance to Genoa. In 1768, Genoa ceded Corsican rights to France and Paoli was not rewarded anything. By 1789, the island was decreted part of the French territory. Paoli fled the country and, from then on, he was an English agent; but the real fight was between the Paolis and the Buonapartes. Once Napoléon Bonaparte[25] became an Emperor, he made few favors for his native place: French oppression was as harsh as it had ever been, but the Corsicans "were filled with pride that one of their own was the master of a mighty empire which extended as far as Moscow and whose brothers shared the thrones of Europe." (Stephens, 332-333)

The XIXth and first half of the XXth century were marked by a depression for Corsica. A great proportion of the population emigrated to find work in the industries and public services of the world. In the second half of the century, discontent about the settlement of refugees from Algeria after the Independence caused terrorism against private and public properties; this reaction was unexpected: in the past, the Corsicans were not notorious for separatism, as documented in a *L'Express* article (Le Roy Ladurie (e), 47). The *Action Régionaliste Corse* started in 1967. In 1975, during protest against the opening of a new agricultural enterprise by a refugee from North Africa, two State troopers were killed in Aleria. In 1982,

[25] The name *Buonaparte* was sounding too foreign, so it was changed and simplified into *Bonaparte*.

the first Independent Corsican Assembly is elected, according to the Decentralization Deferre Law. But the bases for separatism parties were laid and, nowadays, Corsican terrorism is as much feared by the French as the Basque terrorism.

The Corsican Language in Education

Corsu (the Corsicans' name for their own language) is a romance language of late latinization. But it established itself strong enough to receive influences from other romance dialects or languages.

Beginning with the IXth century, the Tuscan influence was supreme. It is mostly a matter of lexical borrowings. Some syntactical tuscanisms that did not carry over in modern Italian can also be observed.

The Genoan dialect left little. By the time of their most powerful input into Corsica, the Genoans were already using the national Italian language, derived from Tuscan.

French influences are even more important. They are however only lexical. The compulsory French education of the last 140 years made that interference quite inescapable.

Corsican writers, using the popular form of language, appeared at the end of the XIXth century. The first local newspaper, printed in the dialect, was published in 1896.

France, during most of the XXth century, was playing the game dialect/language. For instance, when the Deixonne law (1951) granted recognition to 'local languages', the Ministry of Education claimed it did not apply to Alsatian or Corsican as being only 'allogeneous dialects' of German or Italian! It took until 1974 to have this illogical position reconsidered.

A D.E.U.G. in Corsican is offered to prospective schoolteachers. Private initiative, in the case of Corsica as in many similar situations, was very helpful in starting experimental teaching in the local language. *Scola Corsa* began operating in 1972. Naturally, the spelling assigned to the language is far from phonetic and relies heavily on Italian orthoepy; it seems that a phonetic spelling, anyway, is an illusion.

But even the most ambitious activists must acknowledge that Corsicans speak, at best, 'Frenchified Corsu' instead of 'Corsified French' and that their language will die pretty soon.

Some Language Exposure[26].

Lehen Ikasgaia.	*First Lesson.*
Jainkoak dautzula egun on, Jauna.	*God grant you a good day, Sir.*
Bai zuricere, Anderea.	*To you the same, Madam.*
Nola zira?	*How are you?*
Ongi niz; eta zu?	*I am fine, how about you (and you)?*
Ni ere bai.	*So am I.*
Agur Jaunak!	*Goodday, Sirs!*
Bai zueri ere, Andereak!	*Goodday to you, ladies!*
Ontsa zirezte?	*How are you?*
Arras ontsa gira, Jainkoari esker.	*We are fine, thanks to God.*
Hobe segurki.	*Very good, indeed.*
Aita eri da?	*Is Father sick?*

[26] After Jean Haritschelar's *Être Basque*, quoted in Gasquin, 366 - 367

Ez, aita eta ama, biak ontsa dira. *No, Father and Mother are both fine.*

Vocabulary.

Aita	*Father*	**Ama**	*Mother*
Andere	*Lady*	**Arras**	*Quite*
Bai	*Yes*	**Bi**	*Two*
Biak	*Both*	**Egun**	*Day*
Ere	*also*	**Esker**	*Thanks to*
Ez	*No*	**Hobe**	*Very good*
Jainko	*God*	**Jaun**	*Sir*
Nola	*How*	**On**	*Good*
Ongi	*Fine*	**Ontsa**	*Fine*
Segurki	*Indeed*	**Zuri**	*To You*

Grammar.

Articles: Preceding a Nominative singular: **a**.

Preceding a Nominative plural: **ak**.

for subjects of intransitive verbs.

Preceding an Active singular: **ak**.

Preceding an Active plural: **ek**.

for subjects of transitive verbs.

Gender: There is no gender either for nouns or for adjectives.

History and Geography.

In a situation similar to the North- and South-Catalonians, the North-Basques (a population of 230 000 in the *département* of *Pyrénées-Atlantique*, 80 to 150 000 of whom understand the Basque language) are the part of the *Euskadi* (B.: country, nation) annexed by the French. The South-Basques (2 145 000), citizens of Spain, enjoy greater autonomy and rights of self-government. The Basque minority is a unique community ("the least hybridized population in Europe", claims *Peuples et langues de France* (Gaquin, 349)), speaking a very archaic language the origin of which linguists have given up defining and seem to accept as that most unusual artifact: an indigenous language.[26] According to another source, the words of the Basque language meaning 'axe', 'knife', 'chisel' are based on the stem *aitz* (B.: stone); words more ancient than the Iron, or even Bronze Age! (Le Roy Ladurie (b), 23)

The Basques were apparently already settled when the Indo-Europeans invaded Europe by 2000 B.C. The Romans attempted colonization and latinization with little success; they called these mountaineers *Vascones* which is what the Basque word *Euskadi* sounded like to a Latin ear. Subsequently, there were constant fights between the self-reliant Basques and the Merovingian and Carolingian kings who presumed they were disobedient vassals. The most famous took place at Roncevaux in 778 and was immortalized as *the Song of Roland*.[27] Christianity became common by the end of the VIIth century.

At the end of the Middle-Ages, the three Basques 'provinces' changed hands; Labourd and Soule which

[26] cf. Hagège

[27] Although, for the sake of updating, the illustrious XIIth century ballad changed ennemies, replacing Basques with Moors.

were under English dominion during the *Hundred Years' War* were annexed by France in 1451, Lower-Navarre waited till 1589, when the former king of Navarre became also king of France (Henri IV). Unlike in most of French territories and vicinity, there was no real feudalism in the *Pays-Basque*: the nobility had little influence over public affairs and serfdom was unknown.

In the XVIth century, the religious crisis was acute in the area. Jansenism was popular in the cities and Protestantism was established in the kingdom of Navarre. The queen of Navarre commissioned a Basque translation of the Bible (1571).

For most of the modern times, the Basques remained indifferent to political issues in France. The Louis XIV epoque was mostly marked by the construction of fortresses in Bayonne, Socoa, St. Jean Pied-de-Port.

The Basques would have been favorable to the settling of private liberties by the French Revolution, but a fatal misunderstanding took place. The cancelling of all privileges on the famous August 4, 1789 night turned out to be bad news for the Basques. Unlike the rest of the French subjects, they were not oppressed by a multitudinous overprivileged nobility. In fact, the only privileges known to the Basques were public rights to fish in a river, or graze sheep on a land; they were the bases on which their informal participatory social democracy rested...and the Revolution took them away! (Le Roy Ladurie (b), 25)

Under the Second Empire, Empress Eugénie was instrumental in creating the touristic popularity of Biarritz, a beach near Bayonne.

Between the First and the Second World Wars, the North-Basques admired the Federal advantages the South-Basques got from Spain just before the Civil War. Following the example of South-Catalonia, granted 'internal autonomy' in 1932, the South-Basques received it in 1936. The Civil War was otherwise a great catastrophe, because the South-Basques kept loyalty to the Republican government and were especially mistreated by Franco (bombing of *Gernika* for instance).

In 1959, the South-Basques started ETA *(Euskadi ta azkatasuna - B.*: Pays-Basque and Freedom), a movement to resist Franco's oppression. Unfortunately, some North-Basques manifested their solidarity by making the French territory a kind of refuge for terrorists against Spain. Nowadays, the Franco regime is but a bad memory, but ETA continues its activities against the new Spanish government, though it is far from dictatorial. The separatist ideology has created imitators in France, and terrorism in the *Pays-Basque*

is probably the most dangerous among resorts to violence by a linguistic minority.

The Basque Language in Education

Peuples et langues de France cites an interview of 1983 with Dr. Haritschelar, Chair of the Department of Basque Language and Culture at the Bordeaux University and Director of the Basque Museum in Bayonne (Gaquin, 358-365).

First of all, the authorization of a station of public radio for Basque, which was going to be opened records favorably with this scholar, but is not felt as really significant.

Allowing Basque to be taught bilingually with French (3 hours out of 27 a week) in the public nursery schools is much more important. The number of the itinerant group of specialized teachers taking care of Basque will be raised to 29 in 1984.

In secondary education, Basque is accepted as a Second Language option. As to higher education, a department of Basque exists in Bordeaux. But it is not allowed a complete course of studies (D.E.U.G., B.A., M.A.) In spite of the proverbial tardiness of French governments, Dr. Haritschelar must recognize that the cabinets of the Mitterrand era showed better connivance with the regional languages than in the past. But they had to be shown examples by private initiative...

The *ikastola* are private schools where volunteers teach all regular subject matters in Basque. All levels were working in 1983, from nursery school to junior highschool.

The Basque militants, Dr. Haritschelar claims, are defavorized because, unlike Corsicans and Alsatians, they cannot address regional assemblies. In fact, *Pays-Basque* cannot fill up even a single department: *Pyrénées-Atlantiques* includes other groups than purely Basque-speaking. Which is annoying for a people who was, no doubt about that, the only native on the French territory, with the oldest language in Europe! For instance, Catalan and Corsican can boast a D.E.U.G., Breton B.A. and M.A., Why should there be nothing for Basque? There, Dr. Haritschelar resorts to an argument seen in use previously. Like the Catalans, he alludes to relatives in Spain. But, while the North-Catalans were proud that the very mass of these cousins impressed the French, the North-Basques fear their amount should *terrify* the pusillanimous French with a threat of partition! It is indeed a sure win to let the French materialize the word 'separatism'. Not to utter it, mind you! Just to evoke the comparatively safe concept of 'autonomy'. Because that is what

the South-Basques as well as the South-Catalans obtained from the Spaniards. To end, Dr. Haritschelar expressed the wish that the French Socialists give some substance to their slogan of 'La France au pluriel' and do not think of it as mere electoral oratorial style.

THE FLEMISH MINORITY

Some Language Exposure[28].

Goen aven! *Good evening!*

1. **Neen, gy zyt te bedanken. Hei je gy geen mee'nodig? Nin'k, k' hen enoeg. Ja't, 't is stief goen kaffie.**

No, thank you (you are to be thanked). Don't you want any more? No, I have had enough. Yes, it's excellent coffee.

2. **Weul je nog e sukerbollet , e sukerpek, e babbelaere? Hei'je gy lietje vier, hei je gy sulfers? Nin'k, ik e smoor'n nie!**

Do you want another sugar piece, a liquorice stick, a 'babbelaere' (Flemish candy)? Do you have fire, matches? No, I do not smoke.

3. **Goen aven, Mevrouwe Van den Broek! Meug'n ik me voorstell'n? 'K zyn ik Jan Van de Kerkhove van Rubrouck. Hier is Liederik Van Dyck, myn kamaraed in't werk, me schoolmaete.**

Good evening, Mrs Van den Broek! May I introduce myself? I am John Van de Kerkhove from Rubrouck. Here is Liederick Van Dyck, my workmate, my schoolmate.

4. **Is je man thuus? Meug'n ik d'regen klapp'n? Ik geloov'n van ja. Weul je benkom'n? Komt vanaven ekee weere misschiens. Zet je! 'Ke weet'n 'n t nie!**

Is your husband home? Can I speak to him? I believe so. Do you want to get in? Come back to night, may be. Please, sit down! I do not know!

[28] After Jean-Paul Sepieter's *Vlaamsch leeren*, quoted in Gaquin, 460 - 461

5. **Beidte e lietje, 'k gaen nhem roep'n: hen is bezig me ze wagen, hen is bezig me te pachel'n aen ze kare (e tweepeerdtje). Vermaken.**

Wait a bit, I am going to call him: he is busy with his car, he is working on his car (a 2CV). Repairing.

6. **Gy kant op e schlechte moment: 't e scheckt nie, kom vanaven by nuus thuus! 'T is van passe!**

You are coming in a bad time: it does not fit, come to night at home! Is it all right?

History and Geography.

Linguistic Minorities in Western Europe points out out to a 580 square-mile area "known to some of of its inhabitants as *Westhoek*. Here, north of the river Lys and east of the [river] Aa, live approximately 90 000 Flemings, speakers [of a dialect] of Dutch." (Stephens, 358)

Since this is the first place the Salian Franks occupied in their conquest of Roman Gaul, it would be tempting for Flemings to boast with *Peuples et langues de France* that their language is "the descendant of [the Franks'] Germanic dialect." (Gaquin, 421) Unfortunately, a similar claim is made in Rhineland for '*francique*', a family of West Germanic dialects that do not sound like Dutch at all! They also drive linguistic enclaves into what is now French territory... (cf. Bonnemason, 16-17) *Vlaamsch*, to give the Flemish language its proper name, is used in the Netherlands and Belgian Flanders; but, there, with the prestige of a national language.

We have seen what importance the Bouvines battle (1214) had for French nationalism. During the Middle-Ages, *Westhoek* went from one overlord to another, being an appanage of France, then of Burgundy and eventually of Spain. Until Louis XIV fought the war of devolution in the Netherlands, which he won.

After the Aix-la-Chapelle treaty (1668), *Westhoek* became included into the Sun-King's kingdom. And, consequently Dutch was banned to the benefit of French for all official documents by the Villers-Cotterêts ordinance. The teaching and printing of Dutch got prohibited under the Revolutionary governments.

Petitions for the defense of the Dutch culture were rejected by different Republics and the Second Empire in the XIXth century. "Charles de Gaulle, from a Lille family which was later to give France a president,

called for the use of Dutch in the region's schools, and the endowment of a chair of Dutch language and literature at the University of Douai. The petition was ignored [...]." (Stephens, 359)

Actually, what was special for the French Flanders was to be a blue-collar minority in an area where mines and textile plants were the dominant economical factors. The workers in those harsh employments had more urgent social priorities than linguistic. The country notables who constituted most of the regionalist task-forces felt they had little understanding and less sympathy for this kind of exclusion. So that, by the time the pluralistic reaction took place, the Flemings were not prepared to make profit out of it.

When the World Wars came, French doubts about the patriotic solidarity of Flanders were put at rest; except for the unfortunate case of Abbé Gantois, which was eventually more ludicrous than tragic. (Le Roy Ladurie (h), 30)

The Flemish Language in Education

The case of Fleming seems more desperate than most. Of course, in such an industrialised region, there is no claim of monolingual persons, unable to perform ordinary activities because of improper command of French.

In the informative interview (Gaquin, 435-457) with Mr. Jacques Fermaut, secondary school teacher, one experimental bilingual teaching primary school is mentioned. Apparently, Dutch can be chosen as a second modern-language in highschool (but not the local Flemish). There again, we see the concealed, and bad effect of the Deixonne law.

Of course, Mr. Fermaut paints an attractive picture for Dutch, its richness, its evocativeness, its precision, its antiquity. But the *Westhoek* dialect has never developped a real literature, unlike other regional languages, neither in the past nor since the general opening of the popular market. There is, now, local radio-stations, speaking in Flemish all day long and dailies. Not a specific gift from the French, but the state monopoly for broadcasting expired in 1981. But the corpus is slim.

The Flemish-speaking population is really old. One may foresee the language will disappear within a few decades, unless quite a number of people develop stronger commitment for it.

THE OCCITAN MINORITY

Some Language Exposure[28].

L'occitan: primièra leiçon. *Occitan: First Lesson.*

Saluts

- Bonjorn, Tòni.

- Bonjorn, Robèrt.

- Consí te portàs, l'amic?

- Me pòrti pro plan.

- E tos parents, consí se pòrtan?

- A se portar, se pòrtan plan

- Bonjorn, Madomaisèla Tonieta?

- Bonjorn, Robèrt, qué portatz aquí?

- Vos pòrti de flors.

- Grandmercé. Que son polidas! Ne portatz a totas las dròllas?

- Un jovent ne pòrta a una dròlla, es normal, qué?

- Consí portatz a l'ostal, l'oncle?

- Nos portam plan, granmercé. E tu?

- Coma un ròc!

- Un rocàs o un roquet?

[28] After Crestian Bailon and Robert Lafont's *Metòde per aprene l'occitan parlat.*, quoted in Gaquin, 525 - 527

- Los Roquetas nos portam totes plan, aquò rai!

- Es vertat! A la Ròca es coma a Tolosa, los que i demòram, d'aquía la mòrt, vivon plan.

- Aquò's plan polit, mas pòdi pas demorar mai. Adieusiàtz, l'oncle.

Adieusiátz, l'ôme.

II.

Jòrdi: **- Bonjorn, Tòni, consí te pòrtas?**

Tòni: **Bonjorn, Jòrdi.**

Jòrdi: **- Consí va?**

Tòni: **- Va pro plan, granmercé, e tu?**

Loïs: **- Consí va, Madomaisèla?**

Tonieta: **- Pro plan. E vos?**

Pèire: **- Que pòrtas aqui?**

Loïs: **- Pòrti de flors a una dròlla.**

Leon: **- Qu'es aquo que portatz?**

Loïs e Tòni: **- Portam de flors a l'ostal.**

Jòrdi: **- Aquò's plan polit, mas consí va l'ostal?**

Pèire: **L'ostal se pòrta coma un ròc.**

Tòni: **- Consí va, los Roquetas?**

Loïs: **- Va plan, granmercé.**

Jòrdi: - **Demoratz a Tolosa?** Loïs: - **Non, demoram a la Roca.**

Pèire: - **Te'n vas?** Loïs: - **Pòdi pas demorar mai.**

Pèire: - **Adieusiátz, Loïs.** Loïs: **Adieusiátz plan, Pèire.**

History and Geography.

It may be doubted that the word minority is accurate in this case. The domaine of the *langue d'oc* (formally now named *Occitania*) covers about 30 (out of 96) French *départements*; if we take into consideration the other seven minorities, not much is left to unfortunate *Langue d'oïl* speakers! But, of course, there are myriads of communicators in the national language living on what can be described as the turf of another native tongue. *Linguistic Minorities of Western Europe* lists the *ancien régime* provinces the Occitan language gathered, with their Occitan names in parentheses and concludes that it represents "one third of metropolitan France, includes [...] Languedoc *(Lengadoc)*, Provence *(Provençal)*, Limousin *(Lemosin)*, Auvergne *(Auvernha)*, Gascogne *(Gasconha)*, Guyenne *(Giuana)* and Dauphiné *(Daufinat)*. *[...]* About fifteen million people live in Occitanie *(Occitània)*, a quarter of France 's population." (Stephens, 297) Apparently, 10 million understand Occitan, including some 200 000 who live in the Piedmont valleys of Italy. Two million use Occitan in their daily lives. Naturally, monolingual speakers of Occitan are extinct, and the survivors also speak the standard French they were forced to master at school; they may have the false idea that Occitan is a poor *dialect* of French while Occitan literature was appreciated of refined Europe when the French were still stealing sheep from each other! Occitan is merely one more romance language distinct from French, like Spanish, Italian...and Corsican, Catalan. In his excellent article, Dr. Simon Belasco, himself an Occitan, somewhat simplifies this *abondance de richesse* into 3 dialect groups: "1/ a Northern Arverno-Mediterranean complex: *limousin, auvergnat, alpin, provençal* - 2/ a Southern Aquitano-Pyrenean complex: *gascon, southern languedocien.* - 3/ a central Occitan complex: *central languedocien.*" (Belasco, 998) As far as Romance languages are concerned, "French diverges more from Latin than does Occitan."

(Belasco, 1000)

The catastrophic historical event that cancelled Occitan culture for many centuries was the Albigensian Crusades of 1209-1271. Occitania was incorporated into the French kingdom. In fact, the national language could be assimilated so easily by the new subjects not because it was more powerful, but because it was, as of the XVIth century, distributed by printing. "Ce n'est pas Simon de Montfort, chef des croisés anti-Cathares, c'est, paradoxalement, plutôt Gutenberg qui, post mortem, va franciser Provence et Languedoc !"[28] (Le Roy Ladurie (f), 44). This explains why good Occitan authors, such as Brantôme, Montaigne preferred to write in French.

Protestantism became very popular in Occitania, especially after the *Édit de Nantes* of 1598.

The technological improvements of the Louis XIV era make business profitable in what the French call *le Midi*. But revokation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 brought back memories of religious persecution by the French.

Although the Revolution had rather infortunate consequences for the local economy, the old left kept strong in the South, "the Occitans, later, rallied to the cause of radical socialism and anti-clericalism just as the Cathares had resisted the Inquisition." (Stephens, quoting Simonne Weil, 299). *L'Express* mentions however that this trend is not general. "Il y a survivance, néanmoins, d'une droite des montagnes (Lozère, Alpes du Sud), et même d'une extrême droite littorale, celle-ci formidablement regonflée depuis peu, sous l'égide du Front National" [29]. (Le Roy Ladurie (f), 45)

The different sorts of 'code-switchings' experienced by Occitans were studied by Belasco and they are quoted here because they may have wider application. Native speakers of other languages probably use the same steps in their approach to the National Language.

A - *inherited Occitan*. The speakers use only their mother's tongue.

B - *consolidated Occitan*. In addition, they complete it with learned concepts.

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[28] *Paradoxically, Provence and Languedoc were not turned to French by Simon de Montfort, head of the Albigensian crusaders but, posthumously, by Gutenberg.*

[29] *There survives, however, a 'right' in the mountains, (*départements *of Lozère and of the southern Alps.) and, even, an 'extreme right' on the Riviera, this one amazingly pumped up, lately, under the shield of the National Front of Mr. Le Pen.*

C - *official French*. As taught by the schools and the media.

D - *southern official French*. Same as C + southern accent.

E - *imported colloquial French*. With colloquialisms carefully dropped, so as to 'pass'!

F - *imported French slang*. Same thing, with the idea that slang is even more community-specific.

G - *'francitan'*. A complete interpenetration Occitan and French. (cf. Belasco, 1001)

The modern Occitan culture has been plagued with an image problem; it is one of the cultures in France with a severely derogatory 'fiction persona'. Just as no ordinary rural character can be painted in American popular literature, TV sit-coms or motion pictures without *hill-billy* paraphernalia, the particular curse of *le Midi* is that renegade Occitan authors and actors connived with the majority to paint anybody in the South of France as a blissful hedonist, relaxed to the point of terminal laziness (Alphonse Daudet, Marcel Pagnol, Fernandel). The accent is promoted not as different, but comical and all the features of the southern culture and character are ridiculed to the effect of reinforcing the northern stereotype. Any French actor must be able to fake the Occitan accent, as a prerequisite for employment in what constitutes a well-recognized comic genre. Few majority French people can consider seriously a person from Occitania, and assume he or she can perform any reasonable activity.

The current times have realigned the Mediterranean economy. The *Côte d'Azur* has become now a kind of 'sun belt' for France, with touristic, scientific and technological improvements.

The Occitan Language in Education.

Before we survey the educational arrangements, it is important to report that a kind of revival of the Occitan culture took place in the XIXth and XXth centuries.

Just like the prestige of the Occitan culture came from the literary feats of the *troubadours* of the XIIIth century, the revival of the spirit will derive from literature. "The poet Frédéric Mistral (1830-1914) was the man mainly responsible for the renaissance. At the age of twenty-one he decided that his aim as a writer would be 'to revive the historical sense of my people by writing in Provençal'." (Stephens, 300) In 1854, the first movement trying to revive the culture associated to a minority language started: the *Félibrige*. The first objective was to establish a rational spelling for the language, and then to publish in it. Mistral's quality was recognized when he received the 1901 Nobel Literature Prize for *Mirèio*, written in 1851.

But, the extremely conservative political views of Mistral, which he considered as integral to his linguistic stance, did not please members solely interested in linguistic and literary issues. These, of course, quitted the *Félibrige*. Besides, activists from other areas of Occitania resented the undue fixation on Provençal features and would have welcomed more attention to *their* own dialect.

The *Félibrige* survived this impopularity as a scholarly and cultural association, but it has lost the prestige of being the only linguistic militant organization, even for Occitan.

The standard spelling, devised by Jousè Roumanille for Mistral's Provençal was replaced by another, based on the spelling of the ancient *troubadours*, sponsored by Louis Alibert in 1966. (cf. Belasco, 1003-1004)

As in the case of many regional languages we have studied previously, there is a strong will to ensure the survival of Occitan by private schools, operated secular and for free at the nursery- and primary school level by local militants. We are talking of the *Calendreta, l'Escola Bilingua* system. The goal of this association is to convince that Occitan-French bilingualism is available to all. The French educational system is now trying very hard to take over this successful, popular and no-frills venture and give it a few administrative refinements that may turn it into an inefficient boondoggle.

At the secondary level, Occitan is normally taught in the equivalent of the Middleschool. For the *Baccalauréat*, Occitan may be chosen as a compulsory matter, Second Modern Language, in some examination options and Third Language in some others. It may also be taken as an elective in all options.

Naturally, a language with such a prestigious literature is studied at the University. There are Occitan versions of D.E.U.G., B.A. and M.A.

There is a specialised press, published all in Occitan for diverse sectors of readership.

THE SAVOYARD MINORITY

Some Language Exposure.

It has been impossible to get a source for an elementary lesson in Savoyard.

History and Geography.

The Duchy of *Savoie* was the last region to join the French territory. This adjoining was the result of a referendum, but mostly the price the prince of Piedmont was supposed to pay the French Emperor Napoléon III for the kingdom of Italy. The pro-French choice of the 1860 referendum did not so much indicate a strong sentiment for France among catholic *Savoyards* as it did reveal a very real fear of being swallowed by the neighboring protestant Helvetic Confederacy (Le Roy Ladurie (h), 45). The province turned then into the two *départements* of *Savoie*, Chambéry and *Haute-Savoie*, Annecy, with a current population of 850 000 inhabitants. In 1975, it became the *Rhône-Alpes*, Lyon *Région administrative* with 6 other *départements*. Most French people would not think of this area as harboring a distinct linguistic minority. *Peuples et langues de France* and *Linguistic Minorities of Western Europe* do not report on *Savoyard*, or *Franco-Provençal* as it is linguistically known. Really, apart from occasional borrowings, neither of the languages studied previously derive from *Langue d'oïl*. As its name indicates, *Franco-Provençal* derives both from *Langue d'oïl* and *d'oc*, which makes it at the same time a *patois* of French or an alien language! In his *L'Express* series of articles, Le Roy Ladurie favored the foreign aspect of the language and made *Savoyard* a particular native language. "Parmi les identités latines, on n'oubliera pas non plus [...] les Savoyards du secteur 'franco-provençal' - un adjectif essentiel, quoique peu connu." (Le Roy Ladurie (a), 41)[30] Unfortunately, the indifference of French census to the tongue spoken by the respondents does not allow us to estimate the real number of speakers, and the article does not report any strong movement in favor of the local language.

Such is not the case of the *Valdôtains*, speakers of the same language on the Italian side of the Alps (Valley of Aosta). There are about 110 000 of them, 70 000 of whom answered an Italian census, assuring that 'French' (in this case, please read *Franco-Provençal*) was their mother-tongue. Not allowed to participate

[30] *Among romance individualities, let's not either ignore [...] the* Savoyards *of the 'franco-provençal' branch - an essential though little-known adjective.*

in the same 1860 referendum as Savoy, they were simply annexed by the Italians. They have been fighting, sometimes literally, for their rights ever since. For instance, there was armed resistance against the Mussolini fascist regime during the Second World War and... "[...] British troops were engaged by Aostan guerrillas during March 1946." (Stephens, 511) After the war, the Allies were running a temporary government of Italy, pending democratic elections to create a Republic and, certainly, were not to interfere with the linguistic policies of a forthcoming state.

In the same way, history of the 'French dialects' spoken in Switzerland could have been approached too. But, interesting as it would be, we cannot delve also into Walloon, Jurassian, Romagnol, Channel-Islander, Rhaeto-Romance and North-African dialects, in so far as our topic is the **native** languages of France.

The Savoyard Language in Education

Apparently, there is no official policy to include *Franco-Provençal* among the languages handled by the Ministry of Education. An article in *L'Express* honors Marc Bron, a regular math teacher who teaches also the Savoyard dialect eight hours a week in a Middleschool, out of personal commitment (Pons, 46). The article underlines the fact that no other activity takes place.

WRITING ON THE NATIVE LANGUAGES OF FRANCE

After writing this chapter on the native languages of France, many problems that were not manifest before the fact became apparent. What questions did a native speaker of the French national language have?

What are the limits of the topic?

Not all sources agree on the listing of native languages. For instance, only *Langues de France* recognizes the Mosellan dialect as a distinct language from Alsatian. The others either accept the convenient illusion that Alsace/Lorraine form one ensemble and speak the same language, or just dismiss Lorraine as *Linguistic Minorities* and *Peuples et Langues* did.

Only *Langues de France* and the *Express* series recognize the Franco-Provençal region. Which is strange, because this province has long been notable for its activity, its advanced place in the hydro-electrical sector and high-tech industries in France.

Most of the sources assume that the development of *Langue d'oïl* itself is sufficiently known of the reader. *Peuples et langues, Linguistic Minorities* do not even bother to mention it. The *Express* series seems intent on convincing every French reader that he or she comes from a minority! But overall, the closer an author is to France the more separate the topics of the growths of the national language and other native languages appear. As a native speaker, this author left the development of the national language aside. A special commendation is here in order for *Langues de France*. In spite of its limited size (48 pages), it does not fear dealing with the growth of all native languages, *Langue d'oïl* included, and this with the clear, systematic historical and linguistic presentation which is the trademark of French education. The markets for these publications call for different treatments: scholars, who have already been exposed to the history of the development of *Langue d'oïl* if they are students of French, may be diffident of long historical or linguistic explanations; while the booklet, obviously intended for the best in the class of a bright teacher, addresses young minds eager to start learning and ready to tackle with unfamiliar techniques introduced as necessary prerequisites. With *Langues de France* as an inspiration, a display of the growth of the French languages will be attempted.

Growth of the French languages.

At the beginning of history, Basque was spoken over areas relatively more extensive than now in Aquitaine. Indo-Europeans invaded around the second millenium B.C.; although their languages exerted considerable influence, and evolved into most of the modern European idioms, we know little about them as they were not written. Celts, another Indo-European people (not writing either at this time), came in the first millenium B.C. and conquered the area.

The country is now named Gaul. In the first century B.C., it is colonized by Rome and the Latin language spreads all over Roman Gaul. Fortunately, Latin is written.

The local Latin does not remain the same as that spoken at Rome; in its *vernacular* rather than *official* version, Romance (or Romanic) varies according to the region.

Roman Gaul is quaked by great migrations in the Vth century. Among invading languages, only Breton is Celtic, all the others are Germanic. The regions under control of the latter start speaking different Germanic dialects wherever the Romanic language had not settled very firmly yet: Vlaamsch, Alsatian, Mosellan. The Salian Franks are also Germanic tribes who settle in the North of Roman Gaul. Wherever they expand their kingdom, the local Romance vernacular becomes Langue d'oïl, a particularly successful dialect of which is Francien. Where they fail, either the influence of Latin remains paramount (Langue d'oc) or languages of other tribes affect the vernaculars (Burgundian in the case of Franco-Provençal or Savoyard). In less disputed regions, pure Romance languages survive: Catalan, Corsican.

The force of linguistic tradition is such that the distribution will remain unchanged to our days with the exception that Francien, a very fortunate dialect indeed, has displaced many other native tongues to become the National Language.

Who is qualified to write on this topic?

When this writer selected the subject, he was under the impression that it naturally fitted with the abilities required of a linguist. He should, however, have been tipped off by the crying number of linguistic errors he met that the qualification was not a *sine qua non*. Apparently, some other attribute was more important and could make up for whatever negligible confusion there may be in the data.

Not only were recondite linguistic details often wrong, but even ordinary facts. In a pannel held for *Peuples et langues* with 2 specialists of the Catalan culture in the 70s, one of the informants is very impressed

with the importance of Catalan voice in Spain: "Ils sont à peu près dix ou douze millions en Catalogne du Sud."[31] (Gaquin, 210) I then realized that preferring the 5 958 800 information of my *1990 Petit Larousse Illustré* to the evidence supplied by a living witness (and a cultural specialist, mind you!) marked the difference between a mere bookworm and a proper language dissident. Indeed, the rhetoric of minoritary communication does not require such accuracy of factual data, and tends to regard the fixation of academic publishing on it as elitist pettifogging.

Even ethical editorializing, so widespread in all the social sciences, is not welcome here if it happens to run against some language activist. *Linguistic Minorities*, a book printed in Wales by a language-dissident publisher, wants to blazon its world-wide radicalism by being anti-French, out of principle. Even when this forces it to take positions which are in bitter contradiction with its genuine liberal persuasion. Telling about the execution of members of the *(Waffen-SS) Bezen Perrot* in 1944, Stephens sounds elegiac, deploring wasted youths: "They were unrepentant, convinced that France was the enemy for as long as it refused to recognize Brittany's right to live its own national life and believing to the end that in the war between France and Germany they had simply joined the losing side." (Stephens, 381) He then spends a long time reporting on the backlash against Breton activists, who were not, by far, all pro-Nazi. Nor where all the Breton *résistants* blood-thirsty communists, as Stephens claims here. The censure was not, however, over a mild case of tomfoolery; and it was not aroused solely by touchy patriotism. The *Bezen Perrot* boys are not only punished for allying with Germans, which could be deprecated with a simple shake of the head, as in the case of a Dubliner boy serving in the Royal Irish Guards. Joining the Waffen-*SS* means not only betraying France, but also forsaking all human decency. No point in lamenting the chance 'losing side': dead or alive, a Nazi by choice is lost for civilized mankind.

On the other hand, a quality definitely absent from the world of academic publishing can be found in these sources. It consists in unconditional solidarity with any one who communicates in a given language, regardless of what they do otherwise. Let's emphasize that what is expressed is not relevant. What language is used is what makes the difference. There is some remote connection with family lore. When the family circle comments, *"What happened to Uncle Isidore (or Prosper or Manex) is a crying shame..."*, a family

[31] *There are about 10 to 12 million of them in South-Catalonia.*

rallying cry has been uttered. Of course, every one was advised long ago the uncle's case was not that tight, that it would be impossible to document it in court, and every family member knows it but, still, we can bask together in that cosy suspension of disbelief, in which desire for bonding and love for a relative are more central than the sense of justice. No outsider welcome. Likewise, the password for admission into the group of 'un-national' native languages is neither linguistic, nor historical, nor political; it is almost biological, genetic, in fact *ethnic*.

You must also consider the unmeasurable effect for the self-respect of speakers of a language that suddenly becomes acceptable. It is not that the labor market will widely surrender to these new members, but schools will no longer censure that language, so that children will have one less item to reproach their parents. For a change, school power can be used for therapy, making kids proud of their mother tongue rather than ashamed of it, as was the policy in the past. Of course, you'd better not expect a job to be offered you on a tray outside your community for speaking the language but, formerly, you could not even find one inside it! That is why almost monolingual parents, who are much more world wise than intellectual language activists, insist that their children master the dominant language, regardless of the current ideological dogma.

It is extremely unlikely to find completely monolingual speakers of this regional language in modern France but, should it happen, it would obviously be a tremendous opportunity for them. Elsewhere, in countries that do not combine antagonism for non-national language with good educational systems, similar subjects would be liberated from the unreachable goal of learning the national language...

For all these reasons, many of which non-quantifiable, a scholarly approach would be quite irrelevant, it is obvious. Why does ethnic research insist on simulating it?

Probably out of professional motives: a writer has a topic, very familiar to him and, especially in time of crisis, publishing it seems a simple way to defer perishing for some time. But Dame Academe, a very august lady, does not go all out for tender and compassionate pieces singing the beauty of brotherhood and the solace of Home, Sweet Home. No, she demands that her provender be packaged as usual, with historical, economical data, and so on. Why? "*Because we favor our food this* way..." Then, the poor tenure-track supplicant takes out books upon review from the library, in order to find poems he could quote, authors who put this anecdote into bookform, names of generals who could have committed this or that irreverence. At

the end, the piece will sing the beauty[32] of brotherhood[33] and the solace[34] of Home, Sweet Home[35]. So that articles which would be perfectly enjoyable in their original sensitivity overload themselves with all sort of traditional factual apparatus their authors or topics are not always ready to master.

Ethnic research has its own set of rules, which do not easily fit those of scholarship but one may attempt to simulate them in order to attain professional mobility. It is only a question of appending scholarly documentation properly. Historical and linguistic data should not be thrown in haphazardly, but combined on an equal basis with ethnic considerations. Let's guard against the self-defeating dichotomy that decrees that ethnicity and scholarship do not mix. If the attributes of scholarship are desired within an ethnic article, for whatever reason, the writer has to be sure of the technical information, and to appeal to consultants in case his or her mastery of the disciplines is not entirely reliable. In particular, double checking of examples supplied by informants is primordial (letting friends make fools of themselves in print is more embarrassing than repeating questions). And then, the writer must be certain that none of our three factors, ethnicity, history and linguistics either steals the show or bores the readership.

We know how it should be done but the question remains: who is qualified to write that genre of article? It seems that no one without some degree of genetic or sentimental connivance should agree to dance on that rope. The author of the *Express* series rationalizes his commitment by the wish that his Corsican wife and children should not be cut from their heritage. (cf. Le Roy Ladurie (e), 47) Or else, it is a job for ethnic writers.

But the problem becomes quite insoluble when multiple minorities are involved. Not to mention being impartial, it is impossible to be ethnically connected to more than a few communities at the same time. It may be why our foreign sources fare so poorly; they can only adopt one of two positions. They can demonstrate their affinity to brother-dissidents by being downright partial, with little regard for reality or more elevated concerns. And we have seen it quickly become overpredictable and counter-productive. Or, and this is not very useful either, the writer consistently marvels at a skill of the minority of parrying a given hardship with an instinctive response and presents this defense reaction as an example for the whole mankind

[32] Cf. Gustav Pfjuit, *Les Merveilles, Musée Régional*, Metz; French marauders blamed for blot.
[33] As traced by the most recent kinship theories.
[34] Refer to Santu Etchahun, Concerto for *bombarde* and *vielle*.
[35] See Yves Le Floc, "Holy Houseboats: Granit Shrines on the Seas." *De/Reconstruction* 12 (1984): 78-85.

to emulate. One group is left out in this enumeration: the well-meaning members of the majority who do not share its anti-minority slurs and deprecation. In fact, they are best qualified to write on multi-minority topics because of their natural detachment from all sides. There are animosities between minorities, too; do not ask a Basque to commiserate over a Catalan's woe. In that case a mere French person will be a better choice for factual arguments. But you cannot expect much sincere sentimentality from a non-ethnic subject who misses the 'family spirit' with the considered cultures. It is the case of Le Roy Ladurie in our set of sources; born in Normandy, a *Langue d'oïl*-speaking place, he has produced an interesting series of articles on language-dissident minorities but, openly refusing the ethnic game, has made up for it in supplying stimulating historical vignettes and anecdotes for serving the goal of a popular weekly, reading pleasure.

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